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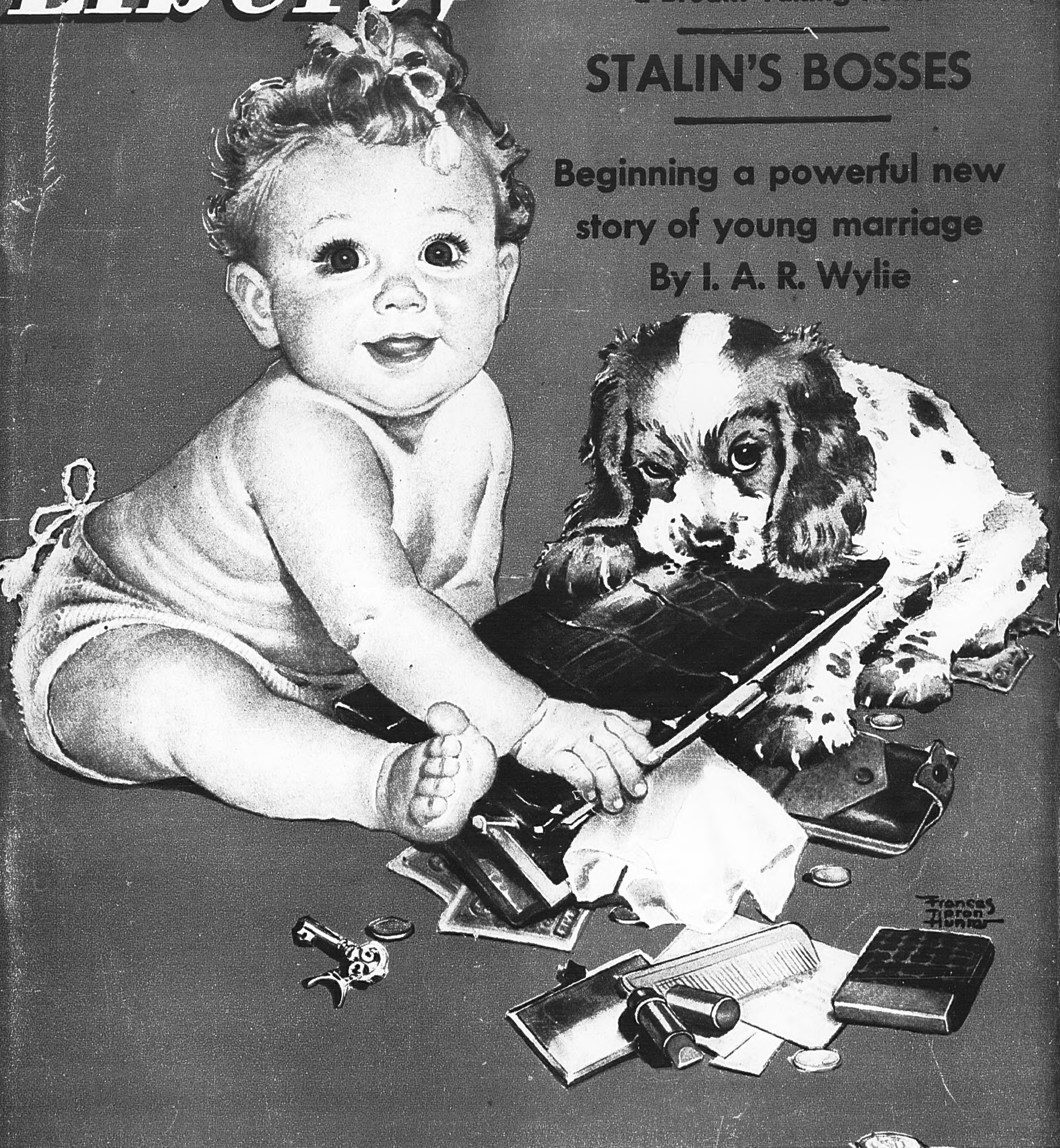
Book: GRIMM DEATH

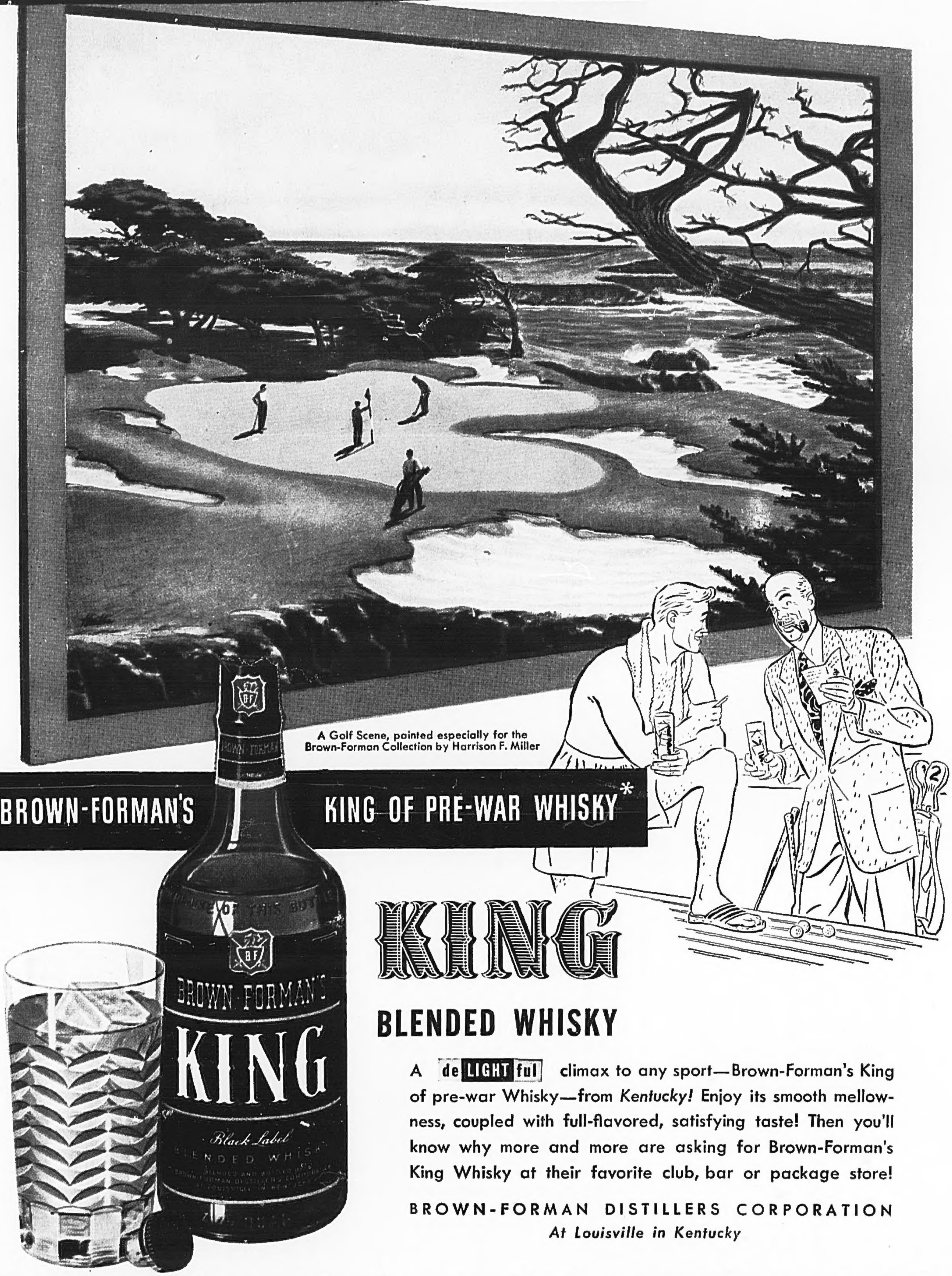
Fast-Moving Mystery with
a Breath-Taking Punch

STALIN'S BOSSES

Beginning a powerful new
story of young marriage
By I. A. R. Wylie


Frances Tipton Hunter

KING MEANS BEST IN EVERYTHING



A Golf Scene, painted especially for the Brown-Forman Collection by Harrison F. Miller

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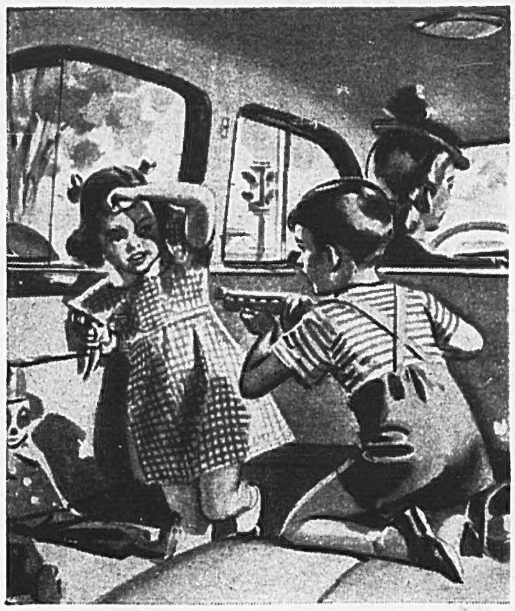
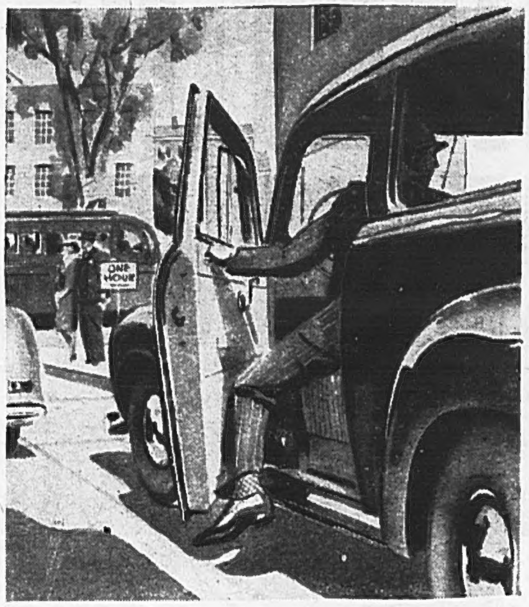
CAN YOU SPOT THE MISTAKES

these drivers are making

All the mistakes in driving aren't made by reckless, irresponsible "cowboys." Intelligent, normally careful people can make mistakes, too. If the drivers you see pictured below were friends of yours, what would you caution them about?

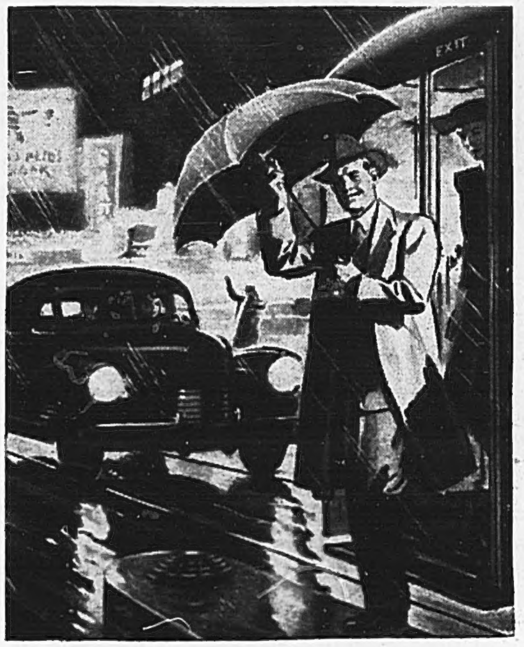


1. Mrs. Smith is shopping with her two little children. She's a good wife and mother . . . but you don't approve of her driving because________________.



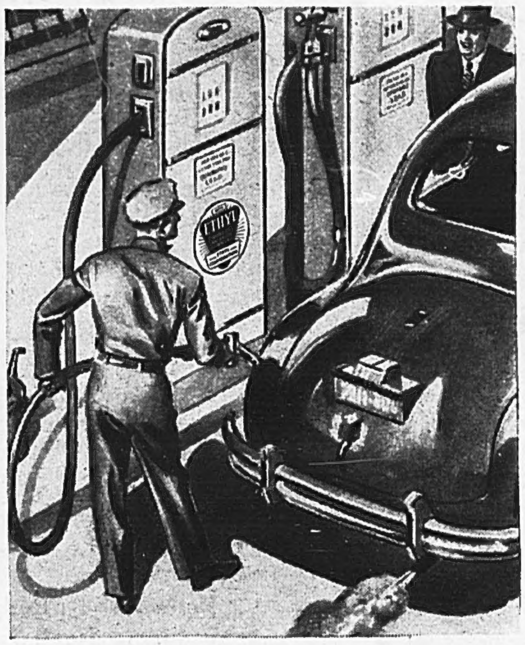
2. Mr. Jones never exceeds a speed limit or passes a stop sign, but he ought to be more careful about________________

____



3. Miss Brown is an excellent schoolteacher, but she's likely to learn something about driving the hard way if she doesn't________________

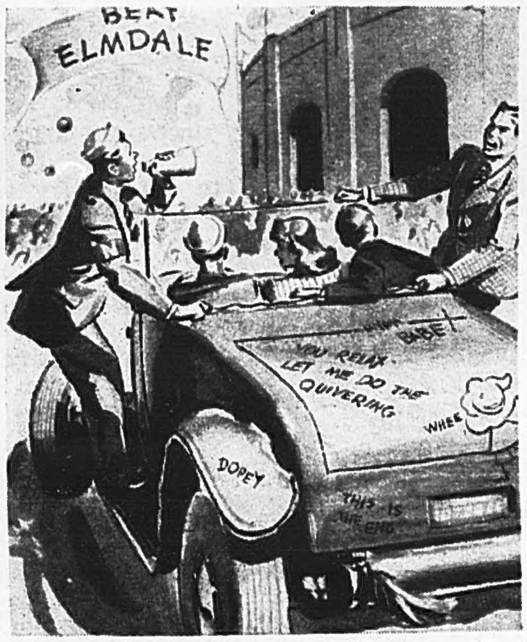
________________________________.



4. Mr. Johnson is buying gasoline . . . but we wish the gasoline station attendant would remind him to________

____

________________________________.



5. "Chuck" got permission from Dad to buy a car because he promised to keep out of trouble. Somebody should tell him not to________________

________________________________.

HERE ARE THE ACTIONS YOU SHOULD HAVE SPOTTED:

1. Leaving little children alone in the rear of a car where they can get at the door handles is extremely bad practice. Unless the car has been equipped with special safety latches, Mrs. Smith should keep the children up in front.
2. Getting out of the left-hand door (unless you're very sure another car isn't coming up in back of you) is dangerous. It would be much safer for Mr. Jones to slide across the seat and step out on the sidewalk.
3. Avoid driving on wet car-tracks. If the trolley stops suddenly, Miss Brown may slide into it.
4. To avoid danger of a fire, a car-owner with Mr. Johnson's good judgment should shut off his engine. How do we know Mr. Johnson usually has good judgment? That's easy. Look at the gasoline he's buying—it's Ethyl. High-quality gasoline in a properly tuned engine makes for a more responsive car and therefore a safer car. That's why it's a sign of good judgment to ask for Ethyl.
5. Allowing anyone to ride on the running boards--even for a few minutes—is inviting trouble. Maybe that's why most modern cars don't have running boards.

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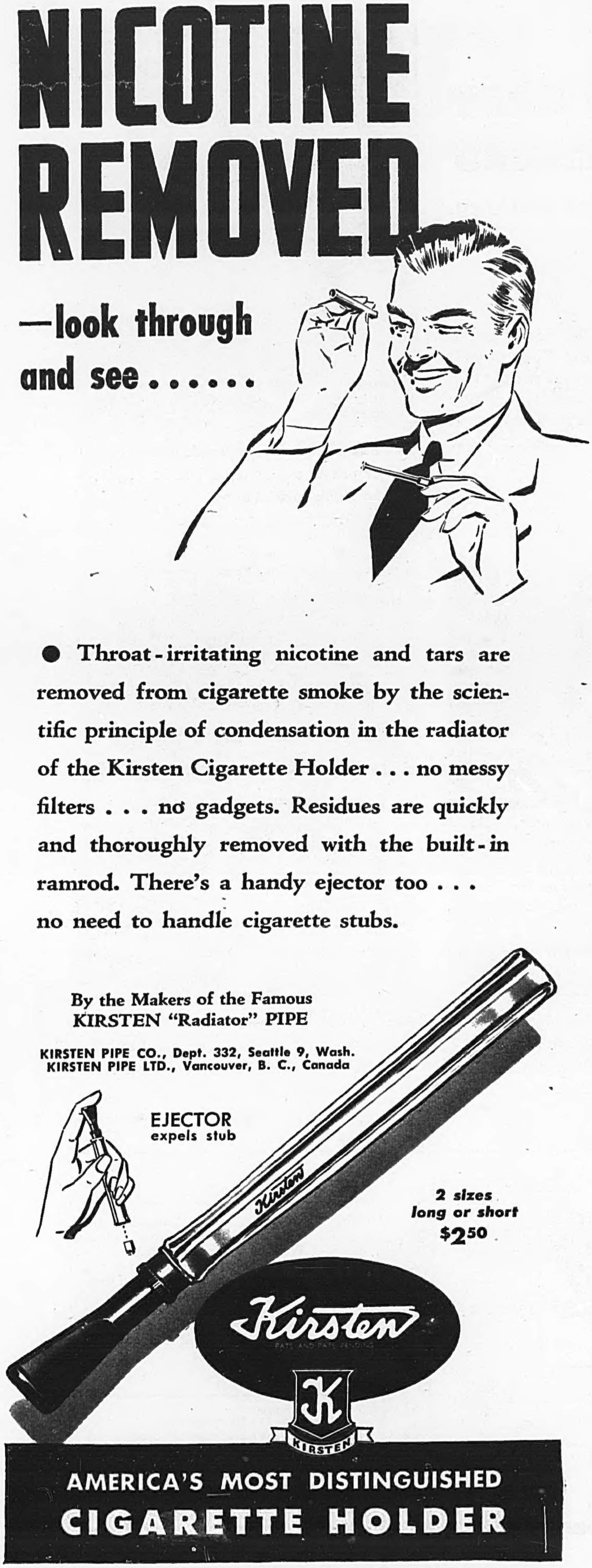

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Painted by Frances Tipton Hunter

PUBLISHED BY LIBERTY MAGAZINE, INC.

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Liberty, July 20, 1946, Vol. 23, No. 29. Published weekly by Liberty Magazine, Inc. 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter June 28, 1927. at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Ten cents a copy. Subscription price $3.50 a year in the United States and possessions, $4.50 a year in Cuba, Mexico, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Spain and possessions, and Central and South American countries, excepting British Honduras, British, Dutch, and French Guiana. All other countries $5.50 a year. In entering a new or renewal subscription or change of address, please allow at least forty-five (45) days for Liberty to reach you.

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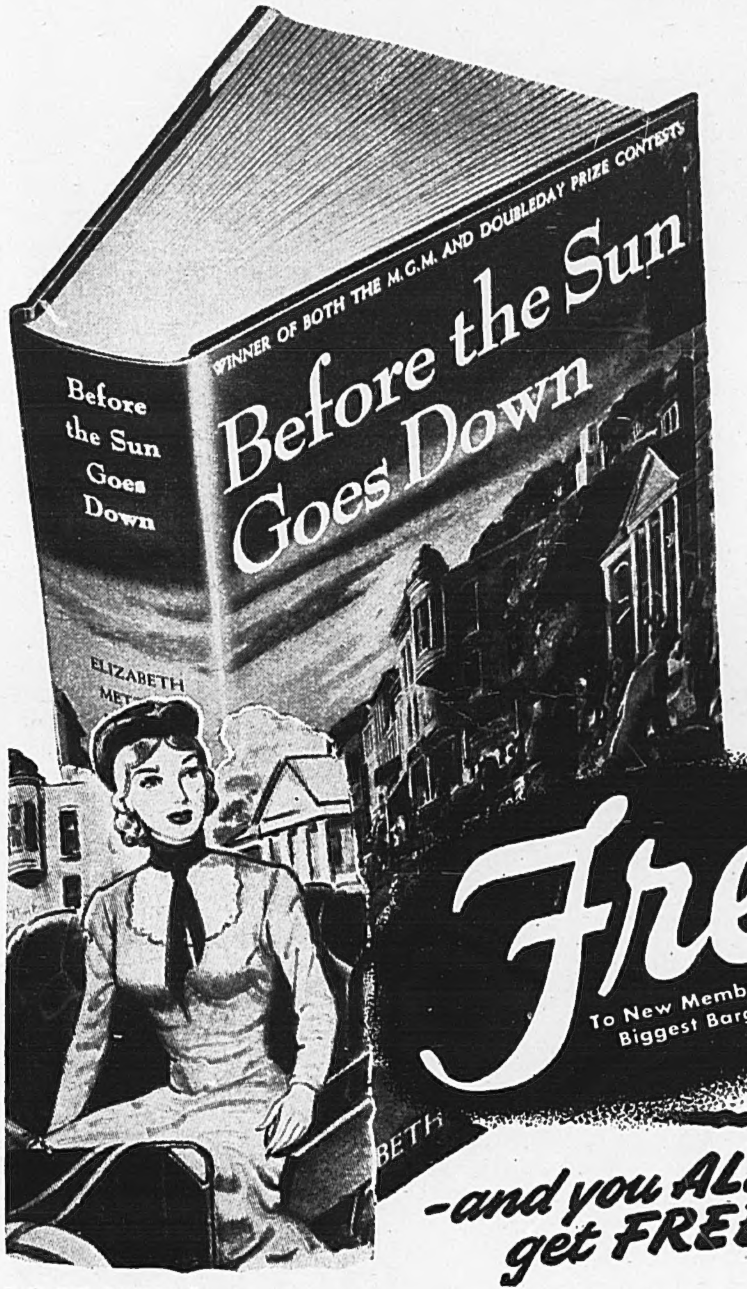
He Knew the Whole Town's Secrets

--YET HID A BURNING SECRET OF HIS OWN!


WINNER OF BOTH THE M.G.M. AND DOUBLEDAY PRIZE CONTESTS
Before the Sun Goes Down
Before the Sun Goes Down
ELIZABETH MET
BETH

THE people of Willowspring wondered why Dan Field, a bachelor, built a big colonial house with white pillars. And the townspeople would have wondered still further about their beloved doctor if they could have seen the room no one ever slept in—seen the bride's bed that Dan Field promised himself no one but Pris Albright would ever lie in.

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"The Facts of Life"—As a DOCTOR Sees Them!

Dan served everybody, the people across the tracks in Mudtown as well as the royalty of the town. The children who lived in Mudtown couldn't play with the Albright and Sargeant youngsters. George Albright and Rufus Sargeant kept their little darlings penned up—especially their daughters. But Dan knew their teen-aged sons had a way of sneaking over to Mudtown and learning the facts of life first hand. . . .

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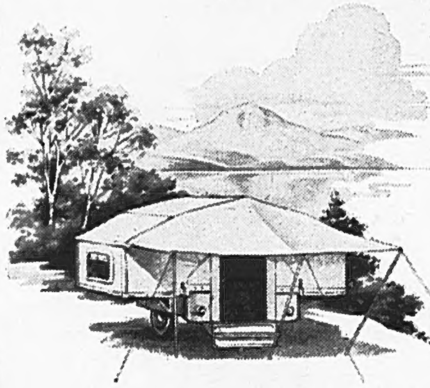

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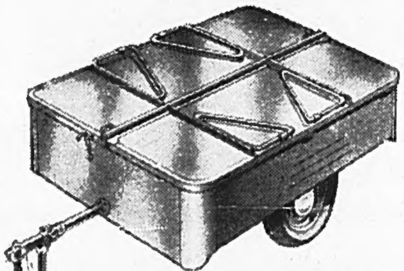

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VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

TRAVEL BEGINS AT HOME

GARY, IND.—Congratulations on Larry Nixon's article, Take That Vacation Anyway (June 1). Too many people used to go to Europe to see famous beauty spots and completely neglected our own historic buildings and national parks. The Western Hemisphere is just as beautiful as the Eastern Hemisphere. People should take more advantage of its beauty.—*Dorothy Correll.*

WHODUNIT

FPO, NEW YORK—I read and enjoyed your condensation of the murder mystery, The Pavilion, by Hilda Lawrence (May 25). The trouble is, I am still mystified. *Who done it?* —*Lynn Aubel, S1/c 910-70-78.*

Cousin May—the lady who *didn't* come to dinner.—VOX POP EDITOR.

STRANGEST JOB OF ALL

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO—These Curious Careers, by Oscar Schisgall (April 13), about the odd professions that some people pursue, made me think of a certain character who had the strangest profession of all: that of a professional arm-breaker.

At that time he was a registered guest of the Japanese emperor, a survivor of Bataan, and a member of a party working on what the Japs hoped would eventually materialize into an air strip. Then tobacco was worth its weight in gold. So when various persons for various reasons wished for a vacation, he gratified their wishes. His professional tools consisted of a pick handle, two blocks of wood, and the guaranty that if the operation which he performed with one blow did not keep the client out of work details for at least thirty days, he would cheerfully refund the fee of two cigarettes. He also guaranteed a clean break, with no compound fractures. Out of thirty-odd operations, he was forced to live up to his guaranty but once.—*Sgt. P. K.*

THE ROAD TO RICHES

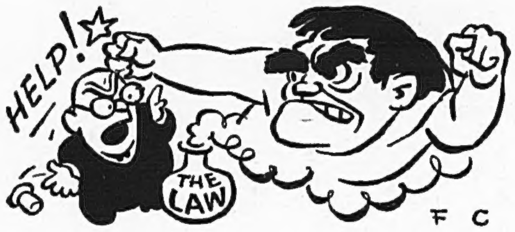
DETROIT, MICH.—It is easy to see that the trouble with the thinking of G. S. Ramsey in Vox Pop (June 8) is that he does not recognize the fact that we are not all created equal in ability. Under our Constitution we all have equal rights and opportunities—or did, until the New Deal taught the people that the government owed them a living whether they earned that right or not.

Those fortunate ones who, he says, do very little, furnish the capital to create jobs for those who are not blessed with the wisdom and ability to be creators themselves.

I agree with him that the working man is entitled to the fruits of his labor, but many workers, if not the majority, expect the large returns without making essential contribution. The only way to riches is ability plus the willingness to pay the price of self-discipline, hard work, and thrift. Wages can be paid only from production and not capital or profits.—*Douglas B. Crane.*

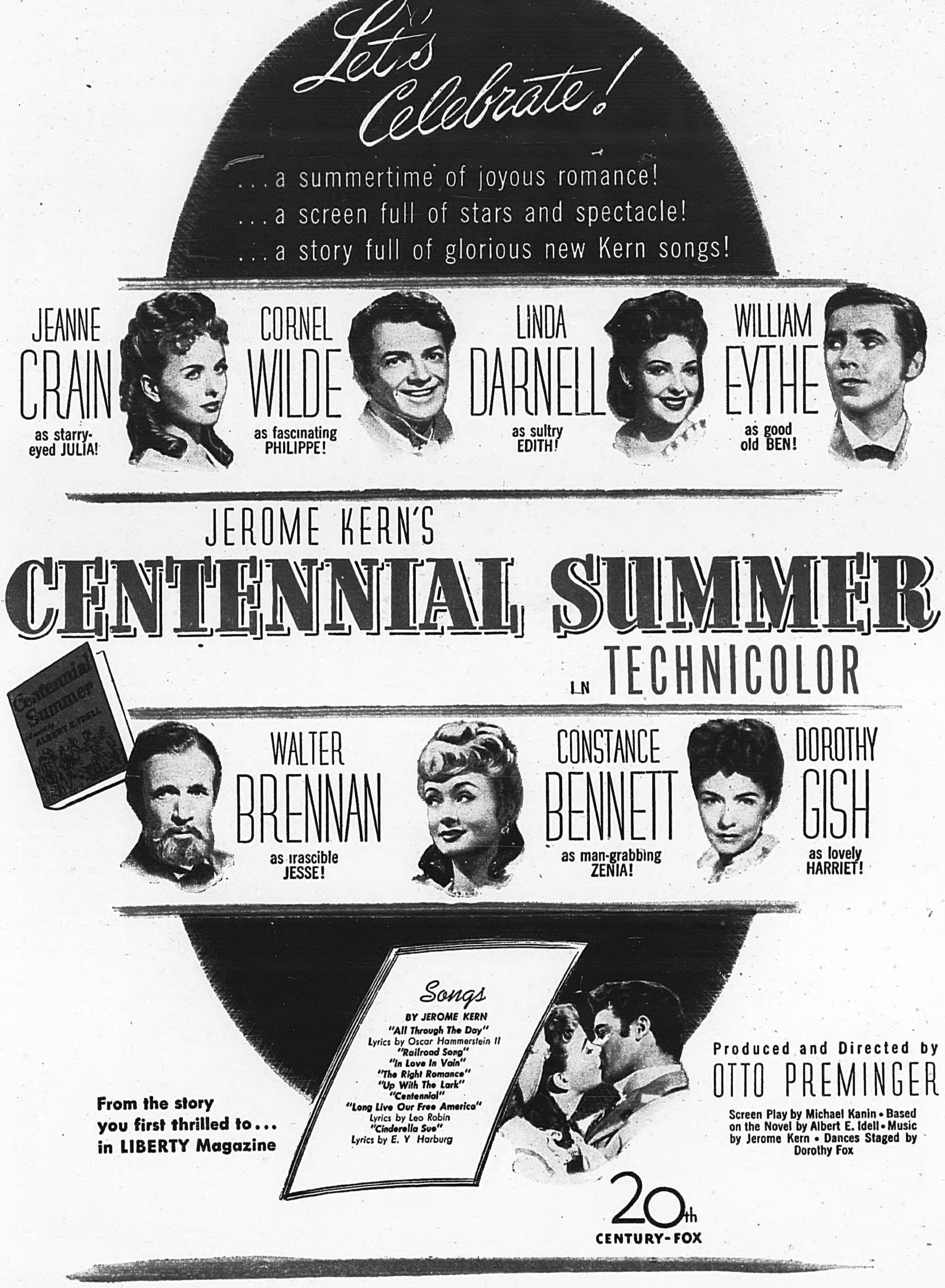
WHAT ABOUT IT, HAROLD?

HARTFORD, CONN.—In The Most Powerful Man in America (June 8), Harold Ickes implores the government and the people to do what he should have done when he accepted the people's money: whittle John L. Lewis' power down to reasonable proportions.



The purpose of having governmental officials, as I understand it, is not for them to sleep with the devil, but to tell him to go to hell, where he belongs.—*K. A. MacKenzie.*

DENISON, TEX.—I, for one, glory in the spunk of John L. Lewis. He is the only man who has had the nerve to stand up under pressure from management and government, which seem to go hand in hand. After the stabbing in the back that the Railroad Brotherhoods received in May from President Truman, Lewis is the only salvation for organized labor.—*B. A. R.*



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JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

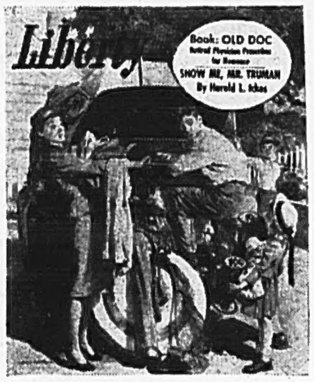
OF SHIPS AND THINGS

RICHARD HOWELLS WATKINS, whose short story, THE SEA IS A FUNNY PLACE, MISTER appears on page 28, has sailed small craft of his own all his life. Once he even signed on a cargo ship on a voyage to England. Auto races are the other love of his life. He's seen them often, for a while as a reporter on the New York Sun and later on his own time and between short stories. Right now he and his family summer in Connecticut, winter in Florida, and wonder why everybody else always seems to be taking a vacation.

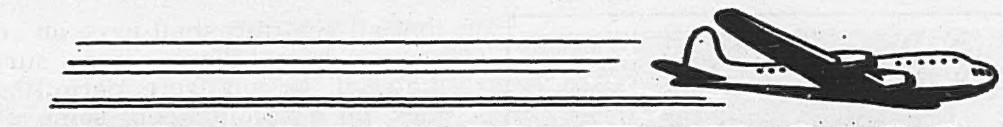
WEDDING-RING EXPERT

WHEN Eleanor Hiteshew was collecting material for "WITH THIS RING . . ." (page 24), she practically set up housekeeping in a wedding-ring plant. And she lurked around jewelry shops until, as she says, "It's a wonder I wasn't arrested for casing the joint." Miss Hiteshew took to writing confession stories while still grappling with high-school algebra; then she became an editor and finally a free-lancer. She's done articles on anything from the juke-box business to teen-age advice columns. And on the side, she hangs around antique shops for fun. Yes, she wears a wedding ring herself.

NEXT WEEK



HOW well has Harry Truman run the Presidency and the country? Harold L. Ickes takes the measure of the President's first peacetime year with stinging candor in SHOW ME, MR. TRUMAN. . . . Medical science has developed a drug which will lick malaria. But we are stymied on the best means of passing on the blessing. Albert Q. Maisel gives you the answer in WE CAN WIPE OUT MALARIA *NOW*. . . . Ballet, once strictly for long-hairs, is now in a golden groove. Read BALLETHOO and laugh with Ted Shane over the art of organized twitching. . . . Edwin Rutt comes up with another hilarious yarn about young love-in-gloom. . . . Liberty's Book Condensation, OLD DOC, by Elizabeth Seifert, is a human comedy of family trials and errors.



ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Is Texas already in the post-war personal plane field? Get an eyeful of one convincing answer: Globe's all-metal Swift

AUTOMOBILE production may be centered in Detroit, but the personal airplane field is nationwide. In Fort Worth, Texas, Globe Aircraft Corporation is producing a two-place all-metal light airplane (two metals, to be exact) that has captured interest and made sales in every part of the country.

The plane is the Swift. It's in the medium price range, which means $3,495 for the 85-horsepower model and $4,095 for the 125-horsepower model, and for these prices you get the performance necessary for good cross-country flying. This means cruising speeds of 125 and 140 miles an hour respectively.

Globe was just getting under way with its Swift production when war came. Under the leadership of John Kennedy, its president, Globe turned to war work and did a creditable job in turning out big-plane parts and accomplishing a lot of conversion work on planes many times bigger than the Swift. It is one of several plane manufacturers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, which has risen greatly as an aviation center in the past five years.

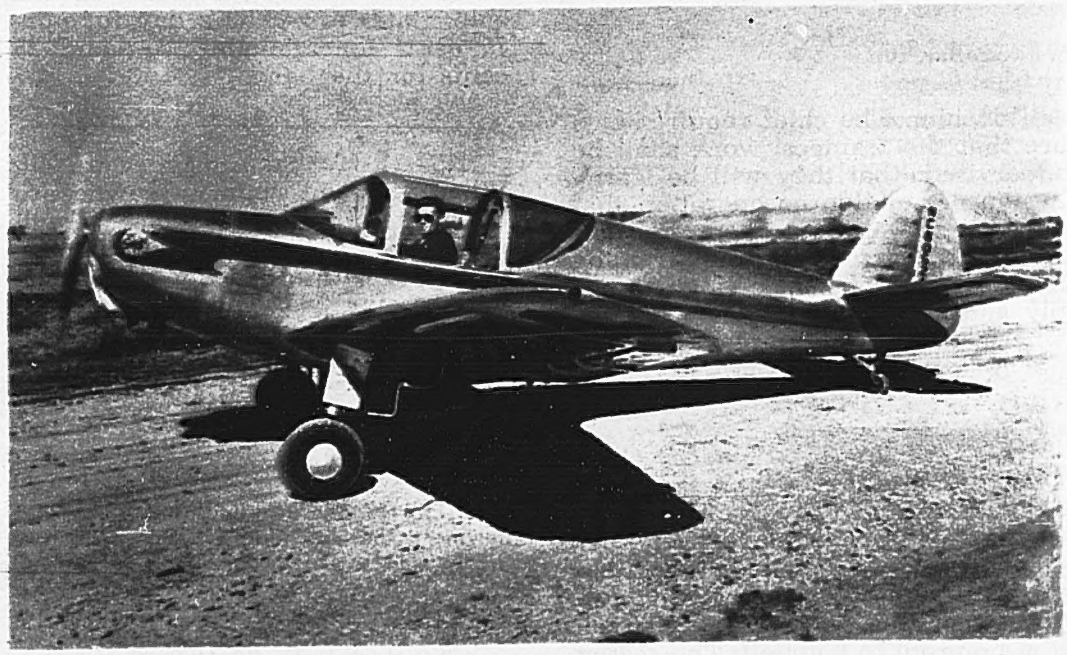
The only difference between the two Swift models is the power plant, which is interchangeable. If you find the 85-h.p. engine isn't enough for you, you can change easily.

One popular feature is the retractable landing gear which increases over-all performance. The slotted wing gives added stability and aileron control even in a stall. All controls are ball or roller bearing, providing ease of handling. Ground stability in gusty cross winds is effected through the exceptionally wide (9 feet 9 inches) low gear. Globe has made a serious effort to build a number of big-plane features into the Swift.

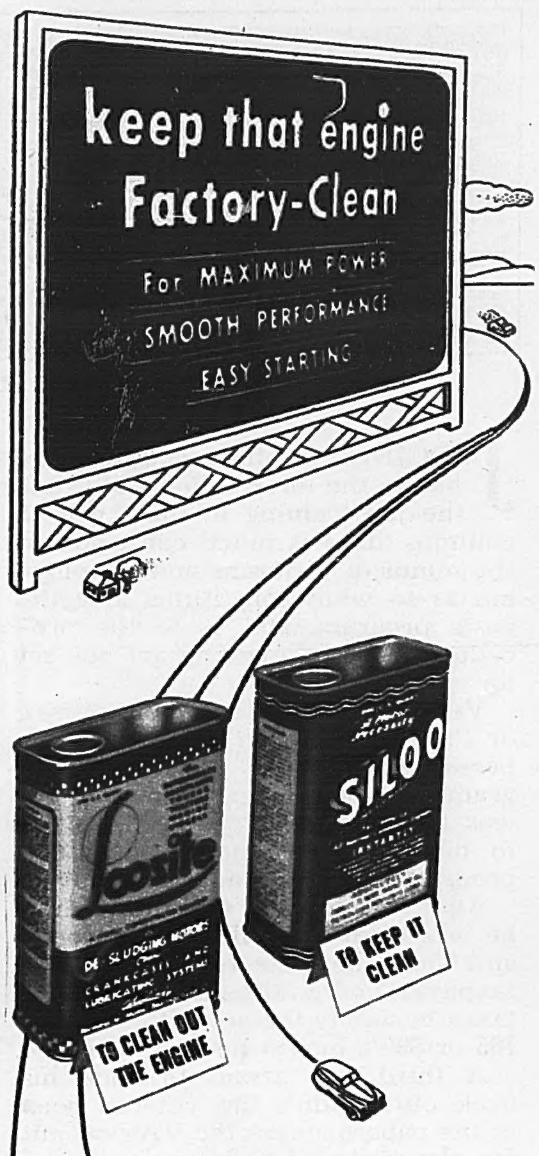
Landing speed of the 125-h.p. model is 43 miles an hour, which is plenty low for ease of landing on small fields, and the rate of climb is 800 feet a minute. Service ceiling is 16,000 feet maximum, and cruising range (30 gallons fuel) is 600 miles maximum. Take-off distance is 400 feet; landing distance is given as 200 feet. Landing approach speed is 60 miles an hour. The power plant is Continental.

Those who don't like that "shut-in" feeling will like the plexiglas canopy which can be opened and closed easily, or closed overhead with the side panels open. Visibility is very good. The top panels and rear section of the canopy are tinted to give sun protection.

The Swift is all-metal semi-monocoque military-type construction throughout. The wing span is 29 feet 4 inches, the over-all length 19 feet 7 inches. Brakes are hydraulic. Baggage capacity is 100 pounds. A number of features of the Swift are not to be found in other planes in this price range.



Here's the Swift, Globe's all-metal two-place plane with a cruising range of 600 miles.



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VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

JUDGING from the response we've had to the information about on-the-job training in the April 13 column, there is much confusion in the minds of veterans and employers as to what constitutes a *legitimate* program, and as to the procedure to be followed to get one set up and approved.

Veterans report that their bosses, or those they hoped would be their bosses, are turning down the program. One employer claimed there was too much paper work involved to take a chance on submitting a program that might not be approved.

Another employer told the veteran he was being paid all he was worth, and since he (the employer) is a taxpayer, why should he up his taxes to supply the vet with an extra $65 or $90 a month he isn't earning?

A third was afraid to stick his neck out: hadn't the veteran seen in the papers where the VA was out for the hides of those bosses who were trying to fleece the government and up the veterans' salaries to figures they were just not capable of earning?

And still another employer was under the impression that those setups were only for unionized trades, not for small outfits.

As long as on-the-job training is part of our national policy toward veterans, employers ought to familiarize themselves with the program as worked out by the Veterans Administration.

This program, under Public Law 346, was devised so that ex-servicemen could obtain a subsistence allowance from the government while they work, earn and learn on a training job in business.

The fact that an employer, because of misinformation, can accept or deny the veteran's right and privilege in this regard appears to be the one flaw in the operation of the law. If the employer refuses to institute a program, the apprentice is just out of luck.

Many have the mistaken idea that only trade level occupations may offer job training. This is untrue. White-collar and managerial jobs are included in the general list of occupation groupings—also clerical, sales, service, agricultural, fishery, forestry, skilled and semi-skilled trades (exclusive of the apprenticeable ones).

In any category, a program may be set up for a veteran or veterans, already employed, as well as for one or more who are in process of being hired.

An on-the-job training program may be instituted for whatever period is necessary to make the veteran proficient in a specific job up to four years. The salary should be that paid a non-veteran trainee in the same job classification (and must conform to minimum wage standards) with periodic increases during training.

Government subsistence will be added to that salary, total not in any case to exceed pay of a trained worker in the job.

If there is any doubt about the legitimacy of the program an employer has in mind, tell him to make a formal request to the Director, Division of Veterans Affairs, capital of your state. A representative will call on him. The chief requirements are that the trainees' work shall be supervised; that they will be learning an occupation or operation that will be of value to them in their future careers; that the training make them proficient enough to apply and be accepted for a job elsewhere in case the employer should not have a job for them.

White-collar, too

* * *

Dr. C. R. Pales, Alameda, Calif. Don't get mad at the War Assets Administration! They are abiding by regulations in refusing you veteran's priority on a second jeep, now that the first one is worn out—even if you swear that you are going to sell it at no profit to yourself. The reason for the regulation is the intention that all veterans shall have an equal chance to purchase scarce surplus material. If you were permitted to pick up a second jeep, some other fellow would be done out of his.

* * *

Mrs. Althea Robbins, Atlanta, Ga. It is not necessary that the injury your son sustained in service be considered permanent before he can file a claim for pension. If a pension is awarded, he will be subject to periodic examinations by the Veterans Administration to determine the extent of his disability which remains, with comparative decreases in pension. When he's fit again, the pension will be discontinued.

* * *

Max Bohner, Visalia, Calif. If you would like your Army discharge reviewed with the idea of having it changed or modified, and can substantiate with facts your opinion that it was unjust, obtain from the nearest Veterans Administration office WD AGO Form 94, "Application for Review of Discharge or Dismissal from the Army." The VA can help with filling it out and forwarding it to the proper place.

* * *

Matthew Olmstead, Dubuque, Iowa. Naturally, it is impossible for the VA to figure the difference between your farm's earnings and $100 a month for readjustment allowance purposes, when you've just started. The full allowance to which your service entitles you will be paid until your first crop has been taken in. After that, the farm's earnings will be computed on a yearly basis.

* * *

Mrs. Madeline Hood, Atlanta, Ga. You must pay your own and your children's transportation to the Port of Embarkation from which you will leave to join your husband overseas, because he is a corporal (not one of the upper four pay grades). The only other cost will be for meals aboard ship. Rates are $1.50 a day for you, 75 cents for Madeline, Jr., and 25 cents for the baby.

* * *

Albert Markham, Chicago, Ill. When you and your wife, who are both veterans, start school, you will receive $90 a month for subsistence, as a man with a dependent, and she will receive $65. The fact that the money is all going into the same house does not disqualify her. Now aren't you glad she followed you into the Army?

VETERANS: The Bulletin Board is your department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

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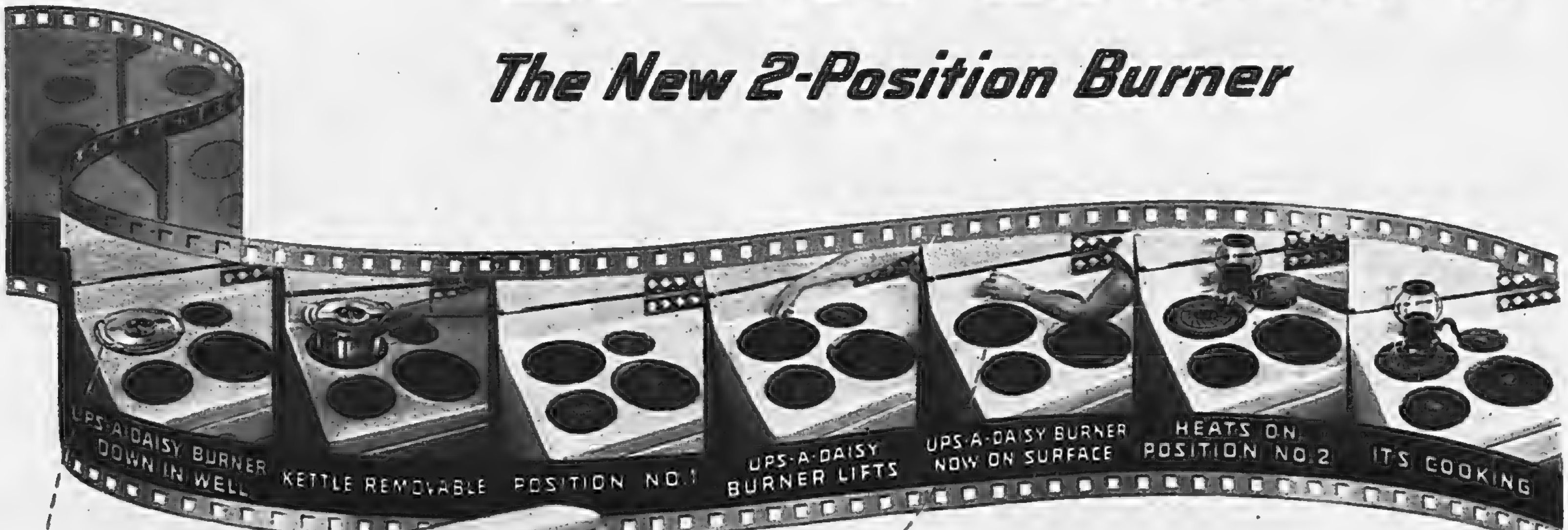
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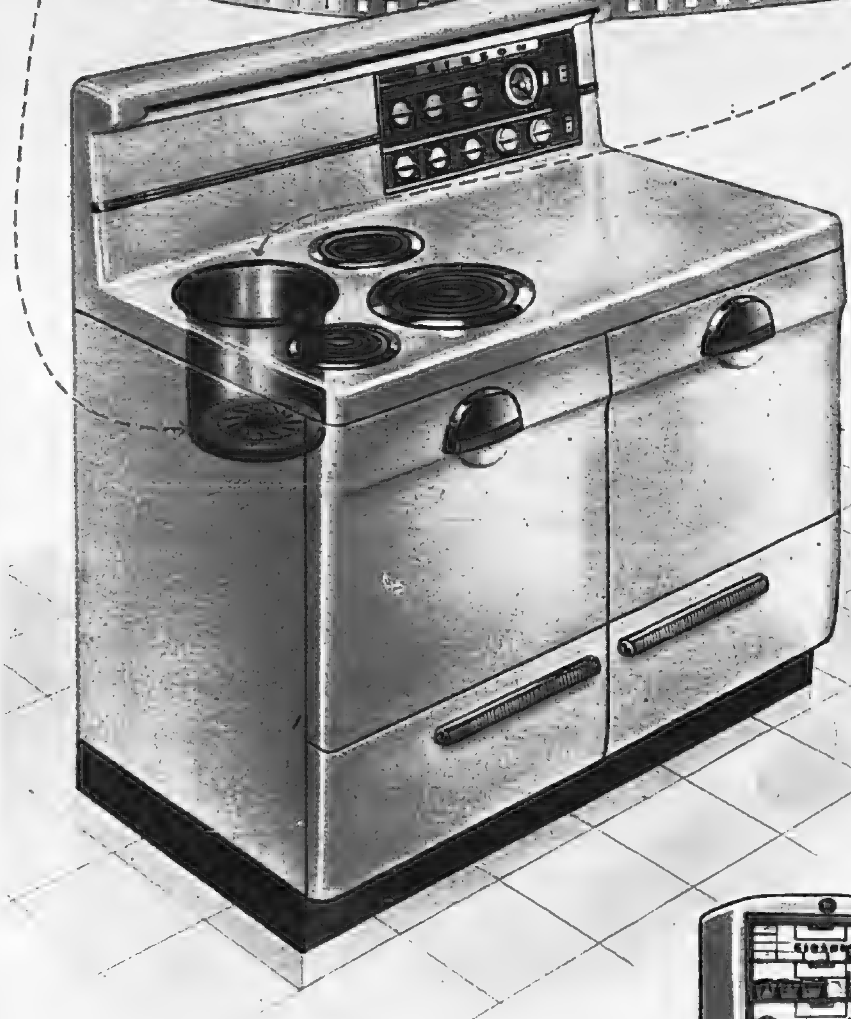

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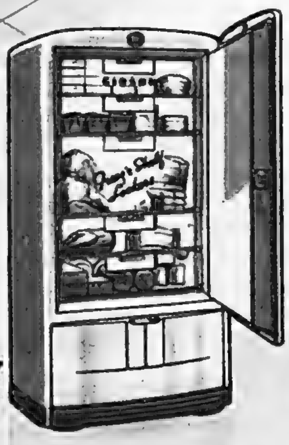

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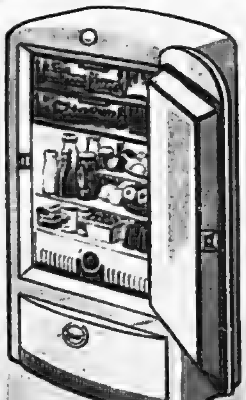

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STALIN'S BOSSES

BY
WILLIAM VAN NARVIG

SOVFOTO
V. M. Molotov.
Col. Gen. A. A. Zhdanov.
G. Malenkov.
A. I. Mikoyan.

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

Amazing though it seems, Stalin has fewer constitutional powers than President Truman. An expert inside dopester on Soviet affairs lifts the iron curtain to reveal the workings of Russia's all-powerful Politburo — from which even Stalin takes orders

SOVIET Ambassador Andrei Gromyko's historic walk from the meeting of the U.N. Security Council in New York led to speculation of all sorts. How was it possible for the Soviet Ambassador to walk out, Americans asked themselves, when only a few days earlier none other than Premier Stalin himself had endorsed the U.N. and its peace aims? And what would happen to Gromyko?

Nothing happened to Gromyko for the simple reason that he was carrying out ironclad instructions, just as every Russian in authority, whether at home or abroad, has to do. And these instructions, contrary to American popular belief, do *not* emanate from Premier Stalin. Stalin, all his tremendous personal prestige notwithstanding, is just one of the principal wheels of an all-powerful political machine in which no one man exerts exclusive domination.

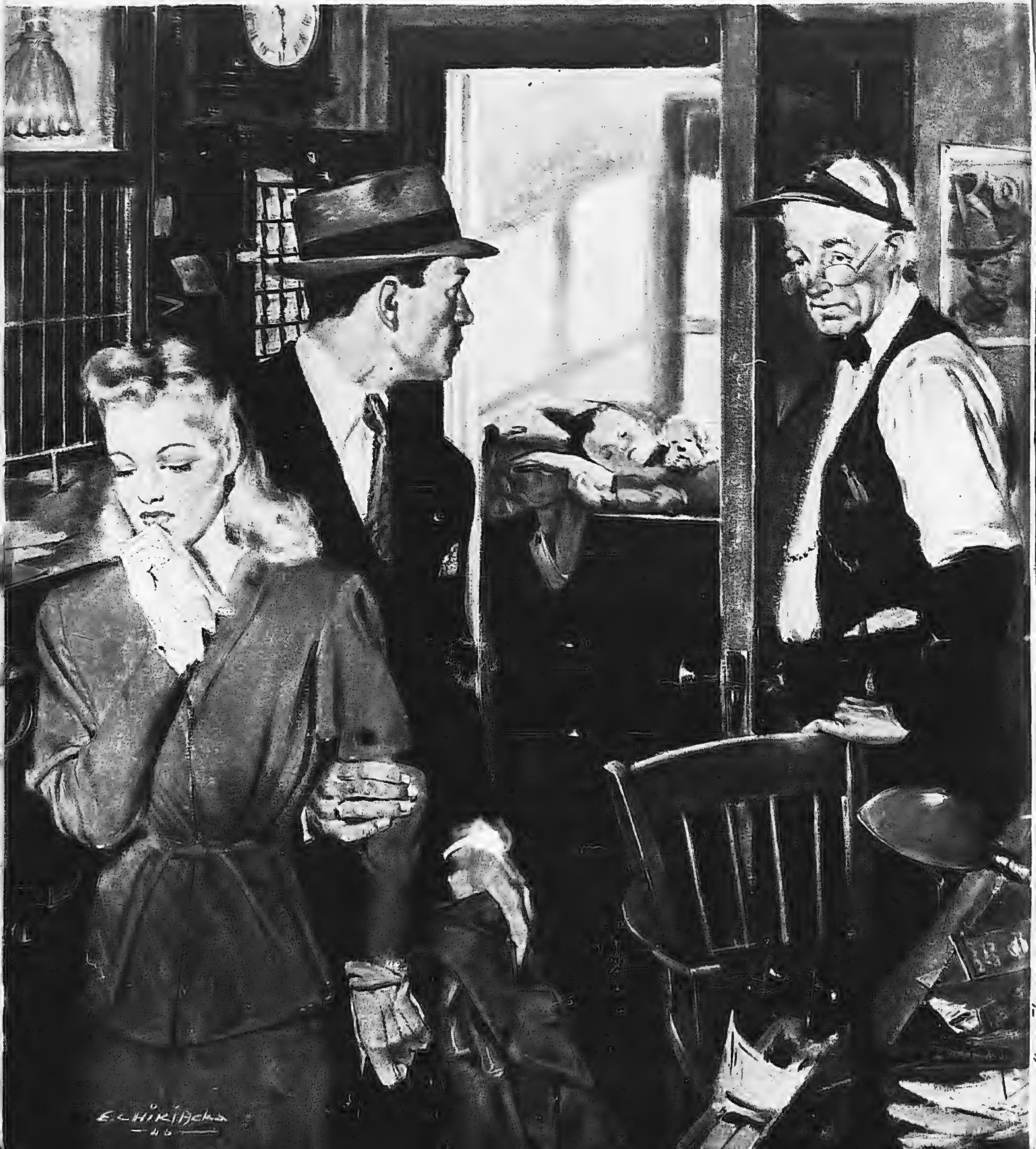
Gromyko, for instance, never gets instructions directly from Stalin. Gromyko's immediate boss is Andrei Y. Vishinsky, Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Together with four other deputy Foreign Ministers —V. G. Dekanozov, Sergei I. Kavtaradze, Solomon A. Lozovsky, and Maxim Litvinov—Vishinsky handles the complex pattern of Russia's foreign relations. Of the five, Vishinsky is in direct charge of all matters connected with the U.N. as well as all dealings with the United States and Great Britain.

Dekanozov handles Russian relations with all European nations other than Great Britain. Kavtaradze conducts relations with the Moslem countries. Lozovsky is in charge of Far Eastern affairs; while Litvinov, with his cosmopolitan background, acts as a sort of co-ordinator between the other four, with an occasional special eye in the direction of Latin America. All five are directly answerable to Vyacheslav M. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Minister and high strategist of all Russian foreign policy.

But Molotov is not just Russia's Foreign Minister. He is also Vice-Premier of the Soviet Union, which means that in Stalin's absence—and such absences have become frequent of late—he presides over the deliberations of the Council of Ministers, meaning the Cabinet. Even

(Continued on page 50)

JUNGLE PETE COMES HOME



ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST CHIRIAKA

This is the story of a veteran named Pete, his wife, their son, and their dog. It is being lived out, more or less, in every town in the country. Those who are living it sometimes wonder why they thought war was tough

BY I. A. R. WYLIE

IN TWO PARTS—PART ONE

THE young man in the pin-striped blue suit talked to Dr. Hamish Andrews in the seat opposite him. The suit didn't fit very well. He'd picked it up, he explained, in a junk shop outside the Separation Center. His hair was dense and black and his light gray eyes had a hard, keen look. The look was obviously a matter of habit and no offense intended. Otherwise the fellow had a sort of roughneck charm. The mouth over the aggressive jaw, already dark with a day's growth of beard, was full and expressive. But what it might express under given circumstances was another matter.

At least it could grin good-humoredly, showing strong white teeth.

"Jungle Pete, they called me," he was saying. "J. P. for short. I got so I could make a Jap outpost think I was a clinging vine or a crawling oversized caterpillar, till I got my fingers on his windpipe. After that, he just didn't think." He looked down reminiscently at his locked hands. "But I'm pretty scared now. In a brace of shakes I'll be with my wife and kid again. I haven't seen 'em for four years. My kid was just a year old when poppa pulled out for the seven seas. He won't know me from a hill of beans."

"That's too bad," his companion said politely.

"Four years too bad." He turned his face away for a moment, looking out over the flying spring landscape on which the dusk was falling. "I had some tough breaks, brother," he said. "A Jap raid pinched my whole outfit two years after the show started. They stuck us to work in a quarry a thousand miles from nowhere. We didn't even know when the war was over—or who of the home folks was alive or dead."

The older man didn't know what to say.

"Me with a five-year-old son!" his companion said and gave a short puzzled laugh. "Why, I don't even know what a five-year-old kid feels like! How soon can a kid play baseball? I can't seem to remember. But I was a kid myself once—my girl too, when I married her. A couple of kids full of beans and notions." He shot the old doctor one of his edged distrustful glances. "Now what d'you suppose she is?"

"I wouldn't know," the doctor murmured. He asked in turn, rather desperately, "Is your home in Dukestown?"

"Lord knows. I guess so. I got a job offered me right away—I'm a skilled mechanic—at the new radio plant. A swell job. But it was take it or leave it. So I wired the wife to come on ahead and pitch tent for us." Something unexpected came into the hard-bitten young face—a sort of shy gaiety. "I guess home is where one's folks are," he said. "They say there's no place like it." He shot back his coat cuff to look at his wrist watch. "Gosh dern it!" he said. "There's still another hour!"

So the doctor knew that he'd been talking to pass time and that not enough of it had passed and that he was almost at the end of his tether. In rather bewildered pity the older man began to talk himself, about Dukestown, which four years ago had been a peaceful, perhaps stagnant little university town and was now bursting out of its seams. And the young man who had been called Jungle Pete leaned forward, seeming to listen intently, but seeing things, as the doctor knew, not dreamed of in an old civilian's philosophy.

"Yeah," he said and nodded soberly. "I guess a lot can happen in four years."

MISS AVRILLA PETTIGREW owned a house, a mortgage, and an ancestor. These are not unusual possessions. At least, everyone owns ancestors. But Miss Pettigrew's ancestor had had his portrait painted. It hung over her parlor mantelshelf and no one had ever laughed at it—certainly not the obviously intimidated artist who had represented his sitter, Colonel Amos Pettigrew (Washington's crony and comrade), with a jutting jaw, a tight mouth, and fierce black boot-button eyes, rather like Miss Pettigrew's, that frowned down on her when she reverently dusted him, demanding of her that, like a true Pettigrew, she make a last stand in the last ditch.

SHE felt that she was making it now. And that the last ditch was the vice-president's office in the First National Dukestown Bank didn't make it easier. It was a place where hitherto she had felt safe and respected. John Seiler had been her vice-president. The First National had been her bank. Now, it seemed, she didn't own much of anything, and Mr. Seiler's attitude had become cautious. Old Miss Avrilla was one of Dukestown's first citizens. But the bank's first business was to stay solvent.

"You are perfectly correct, Miss Avrilla," Mr. Seiler said, "in assuming that your annuity has not changed. But the world has. Consider, for a moment, the price of butter—"

Miss Pettigrew had considered it, with the result that she had not tasted it for at least a week.

"Of course we shall give you time," Mr. Seiler concluded less frigidly. "But I do recommend, Miss Avrilla, that you take steps."

Miss Pettigrew thanked him and took them—out of the once friendly and familiar bank onto the sunlit Main Street. She knew what he'd meant. Sell the ramshackle down-at-heel old house. Or, as her old friend Mr. Jeramy Rees, Dukestown's stationmaster, had recommended—take in boarders. ("You could call 'em paying guests," he'd said, "if it made you feel better.") The town was bursting with newcomers—men and women from the new factory, veterans who had acquired wives and families but had no place to put them. Miss Avrilla had said certainly not. But now her resolutions, like her old knees, were shaking under her.

The street bustled with people she'd never laid eyes on before. She skirted Barston's, the grocery store, as though it concealed a land mine that might explode in her face. Mr. Barston, standing outside with a wealthy customer, showed his teeth at her, like a hungry hyena, she

(*Continued on page 64*)

"Let him stay a while longer, mister," Jungle Pete said. "If he wakes tell him his dad missed the boat."

A typical old-time cowboy at Wyoming's A-Bar-R Ranch; A rarity, incidentally, at dude ranches.

Dude Ranches

For considerably less than a kingdom you can get a horse — and a kingdom in which to ride him

BY DICKSON HARTWELL

AN Englishman was visiting a dude ranch for the first time. After a day of watching the guests in their ranch clothes help drive some cattle for shipping, he turned to the owner. "I say," he declared, his voice full of praise, "you've a happy lot of peasants here, you know."

That fortuitous adjective "happy" most aptly describes three generations of American dudes. Convinced that no vacation spot in the world can match a good dude ranch, they seem to maintain a constant level of the bliss which floods a revival-meeting convert immediately after he has been saved. They regard vacationists who convene annually in crowds at such places as White Sulphur, French Lick, Lake Placid, Miami, Mexico City, or Hot Springs with a mild tolerance as unfortunates who have not yet got The Word.

Some of the pioneer dudes have been going West to the ranches year after year for twenty, thirty, or even forty years, their enthusiasm increasing with each visit.

There are hundreds of dude ranches, all cut more or less to a pattern but no two precisely alike. They vary in size from two acres to upward of 150,000. They may accommodate ten guests or 100 or more. Some have tile baths and swimming pools and some have Chic Saleses and community showers.

Rates range from $100 or less a month per dude to $500 or more, with pack trips extra. At some of them you may make friends with millionaires and movie directors. At others you'll pal around with Susie Glutz and filling-station operators. At all except the big luxury places the dudes become an intimate unit.

Whatever distinctions the ranches enjoy individually, all have one common denominator — horses. It may be the horses that give dudes the shining eyes. But to explain the growing passion for these ranches merely as an addiction to horses is like dismissing the universal popularity of kissing with my dictionary's definition of it as "a salute with the lips." There must be more to it than that.

To begin with, there is usually a romantic setting. Take Rancho del Quivari in Arizona, down near the Mexican border. It is owned by the mother of Nancy Guild, a young movie star. The ranch sits in the middle of a 150,000-acre spread once owned by novelist Harold Bell Wright. There he wrote two of his most popular books, The Winning of Barbara Worth and The Shepherd of the Hills. North of the ranch buildings stretches a chain of mountains topped by obelisk-mass Baboquivari Peak. In the late afternoon, as the sun drops below the mountains, its rays still play on towering Baboquivari. It's the kind of thing they can't do yet in neon or even in Technicolor. That evening light on Baboquivari draws people back to this ranch year after year.

And perhaps the food has something to do with making dudes ecstatic. They swear ranch food is the best in the world. But there are fifty restaurants in New York, fifteen in San Francisco, and six in New Orleans which wouldn't be caught dead serving food the average dude gobbles hungrily. It's just that food never tastes anywhere else the way it tastes on a ranch.

Dudes may be drawn westward by a sense of vast and magnificent isolation. But even that can't be the whole answer either, because many ranches doing a thriving business are small, almost suburban.

It can't be that the West's great shows, rodeos and round-ups, are the big attraction. On many so-called ranches guests never see as much as a calf roped, because there

There's romance in dude ranches. A campfire in the Western night can pack all the enchantment of a tropical moon. For many romance seekers this is the end of the trail.

is no calf, no lariat and no one who could throw it. Even on the real ranches there will be no more than one real rodeo a season, and round-ups come no oftener than twice a year, so only a few could witness them.

So that brings us back to our common denominator, horses. The importance of horses to dude ranching makes it a real event when for the first time dude meets horse. If you are typical, your confidence in untried horsemanship wanes rapidly as you approach the hitching post. The corral boss looks you over and assigns a horse that won't buck, rear, shy, or even run unless seriously provoked. But to you he looks more like a snorting stallion than a bored gelding.

The cowboy saddles him and hands you the reins. It's now or never. Promptly dropping the reins to keep your hands free for unknown eventualities, you start scrambling up into the saddle in the manner of a small boy working his way up the side of a steep barn roof. If your strength holds out, you arrive panting but ready to acknowledge congratulations on your success. What you get is a tart comment about hanging onto the reins and a curt inquiry about the length of your stirrups. To this, one gal replied, "I don't know, but I wear a six-double-A shoe."

The fact that his stirrups will be lengthened according to his fancy is about the only privilege of discretion the dude gets. Consequently any problem of riding—chafed legs, the trot bounce, aching back, hard saddle, or that old tired feeling—the dude endeavors to correct by adjusting his stirrups. Cowboys endure this routine patiently—one woman asked for nine changes in three days—out of respect for this inalienable right of every dude.

Once mounted and safely into motion, the new dude wants to know the "secret" of Western riding. When it comes to giving verbal instructions, a cow hand is often garrulous but seldom articulate. Having learned to ride at the age of five or six, he regards it as a natural function, like breathing. Through several seasons of advising dudes he has culti-

(*Continued on page 61*)

The customers expect round-ups, rodeos, and horses. Nobody knows why the horse continues to be tourist bait in a horseless age.

As a horsewoman this girl is a good bacteriologist —which she is, at the University of Pennsylvania.

Toledo Licks the Strike Problem

There's a ray of hope for the whole country in the way labor and management have got together in one Midwestern city—and have *stuck* together

By JEROME GROSS and VICTOR ULLMAN

Ohio militiamen charge union pickets in the Battle of Chestnut Hill during the 1934 Electric Auto-Lite strike. Two strikers lost their lives here.

EIGHTEEN men sat around a table twice a month for seven months and talked. As a result, Toledo, Ohio, has come closer to achieving a permanent labor-industry peace than any other community in the country.

This does not mean that Toledo will never again have labor disputes. But the city's "charter of industrial harmony," newly signed by industry and labor, will mean fewer strikes, fewer lockouts, and fewer disruptive disputes if its principles are observed.

In Toledo, labor and industry still are competing with each other for the larger cut in the profits, but now they are doing it the smart way—without halting production or employment. Both sides are convinced that nobody wins when production stops. And both sides also agree that, necessary as the National Labor Relations Board and the National War Labor Board were to keep war production soaring, it is axiomatic, if the democratic processes are to be observed, that the initiative for sound industrial relations must come from labor and management right in the shops.

Vice-Mayor Michael V. DiSalle, who later was named chairman of the Toledo Labor-Management Citizens Committee, proposed to City Council that the eighteen men be appointed, six from industry, six from labor, and six to represent the public. A more diverse group could scarcely be imagined when the talks began on July 3, 1945. Yet the committee achieved its objective, which was solely to minimize the effects on production created by work stoppages of any kind. But it did more than that.

Toledo's industries and unions have signed the agreement known as the "charter of industrial harmony," which includes unequivocal recognition by them that they bear a "joint responsibility to the citizens as a whole, *whose interests transcend the presumed rights of any group.*"

This is a principle with implications that make it of national importance. It is a concept the labor-management conference in Washington last year failed to achieve—and therefore failed. It was not easy to achieve this principle and the six major objectives stated in the Toledo charter.

At the first meeting, for instance, there was shocked silence after an explosion from Richard Gosser, hard-hitting regional director of the C. I. O. United Automobile Workers.

"Right now each one of you is worrying about someone getting into your pocket and getting a penny," he stormed at the industry members. "Let's be realistic. We might as well admit right now that as yet we don't trust each other. At least, not completely. We have yet to accept each others' good intentions."

At a corner of the long table, keen, farsighted John D. Biggers, president of the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company, nodded. This was honest talk. It was showdown, not the closed poker found in negotiations over a dispute.

It was labor's turn to squirm at another meeting when Royce G. Martin, president of the Electric Auto-Lite Company, left no room for misunderstanding his position regarding the "closed shop." He repeated a conversation he had had with John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers:

"I said to Lewis, 'What in hell do you know about my business or my problems? If any man or woman wants to join the union, it's O.K. with me.' But when you say, 'Either he joins or you fire him,' my answer is 'I'm busy.' This is still a free country. If a man wants to go to work for me, he should be able to do so."

There were times when feeling was so intense at these labor-industry conferences that the opposing sides glared across the table at each other. Once chairman DiSalle polled the labor members on the frank question: "Do you think that management honestly wants to achieve a working relationship with organized labor?" There was one yes and one "I don't know" vote. But four answered with a flat "NO."

The birth of the idea that a charter could and should be written took place in the heat of one of these crises. DiSalle opened the way:

"I'm told that in some cases labor organizations have moved in and gradually assumed the rights of management to hire and fire and discipline employees. If that is true, management is locked and handcuffed by such tactics and labor may have to furnish some guaranties against that."

Industry and Labor break bread together. Pres. J. D. Biggers of Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co. and Richard Gosser, regional director of the C.I.O. United Auto Workers.

This brought hot opposition from Edward T. Cheyfitz, national chairman of the C.I.O. Diecasters Council, who later went to work for Eric Johnston when the latter was head of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

"All right, Ed," DiSalle whipped back. "If you don't agree, and I can see that other labor members don't agree, suppose you put in writing what you think are management's prerogatives."

The industry members began to look at these labor leaders with new eyes when they read that "management's rights are constantly being modified and changed as the production environment changes. The only non-changing right . . . is the one principle of initiative. That right is essential to the operation of the plant."

They read further: "Applying this right of initiative to the practical problem of management, we find that management retains the power to hire; to fire; to assign work; to direct the working force; to bring together men, materials and equipment in efficient production; to discipline; to promote to managerial positions; and to administer every management technique necessary to production.

"There must be no infringement by labor on this basic power to direct and act. Labor, on the other hand, retains its right to grieve and to seek redress of any wrong resulting from the initiative of management."

This analysis by a labor leader so impressed Jules D. Lippmann, president of the Textileather Corporation and of the Toledo Chamber of Commerce, that he, in turn, analyzed management's responsibility to labor. It was labor's turn to be amazed.

This committee gives Toledo "industrial harmony": (rear) Franz Berlacher of the A.F.L., Chairman M. V. DiSalle; (front) Father M. J. Doyle and A. G. Spieker, contractor.

"Top management should be personally familiar with all personnel problems and should assume ultimate responsibility for adequate administration of personnel policies," Lippmann wrote. "Prompt consideration should be given to the disposal of grievances. Procrastination in making grievance decisions creates doubt and distrust."

But the statement that impressed all eighteen men most was Lippmann's recommendation that "ways and means must be found to take employees into management's confidence. Pertinent information should be supplied workers regarding production activities and facts pertaining to plant and industry problems."

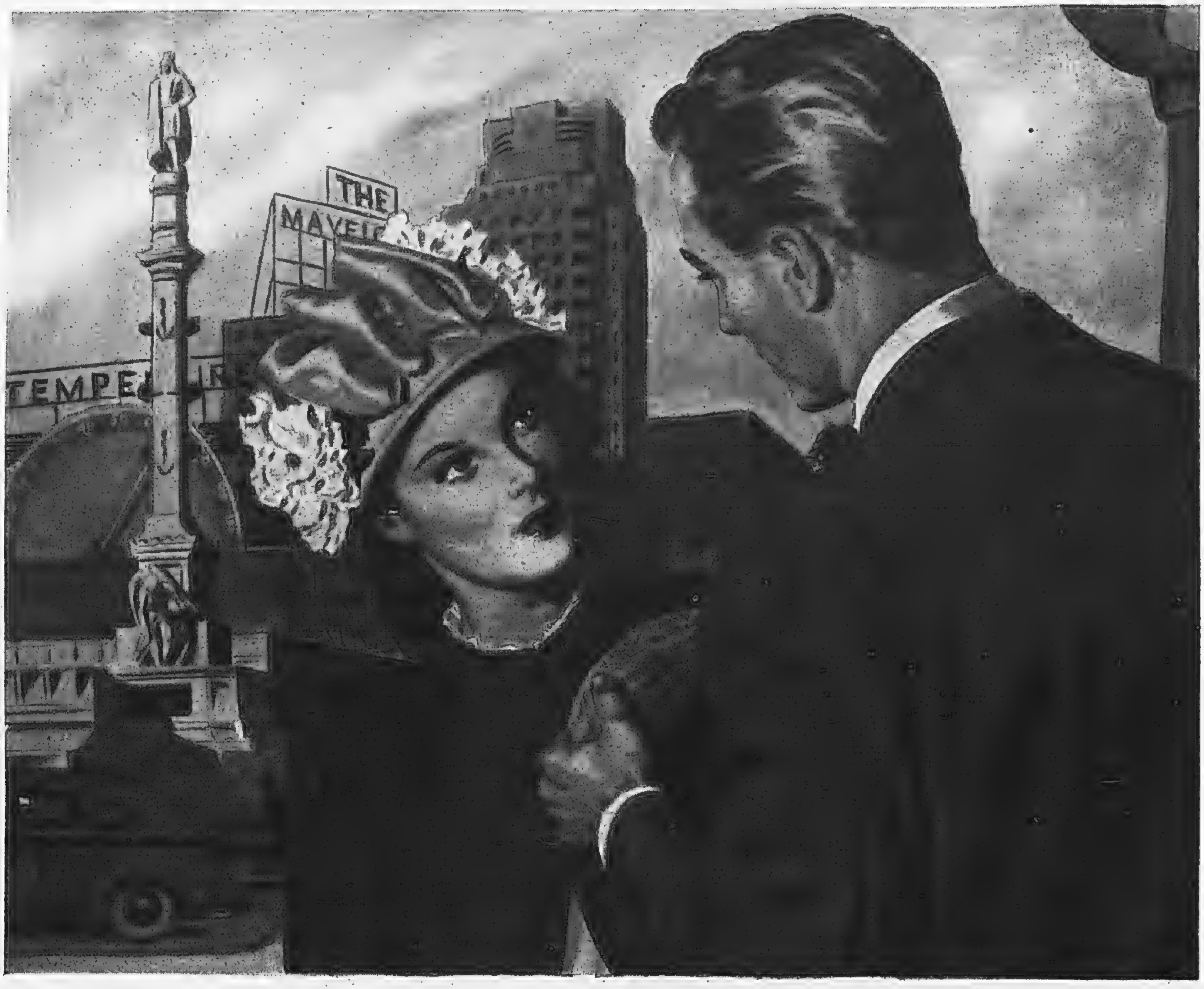
Lippmann also said that "management should subscribe wholeheartedly to the broad principles of collective bargaining as a method of communication between employees and management" and that industry must "spell out its specific labor policy" to prevent misunderstandings.

THIS statement was distributed on August 7, 1945, and A. G. Spieker, a contractor, was deputized to enlarge on Lippmann's recommendation that ways and means should be found to bring "employees into management's confidence." Such frank assumption of responsibility by both labor and management made the evolution of a written agreement inevitable. A subcommittee of six was appointed to draw up a charter based on the Cheyfitz, Lippmann and Spieker statements.

At this point, a public member of the committee, Father Michael J. Doyle, director of Toledo Catholic Charities, recalled that when the conferences began, labor was grouped at one end of the table and management at the other. "We public members hardly knew where to sit," Father Doyle said. "Now we are eighteen men together, not groups of six each."

It was true. Lippmann was sitting alongside of Cheyfitz. J. Preston Levis, president of the Owens-Illinois Glass Company, was sitting next to William Sturm, A.F.L. regional director. The others were intermingled, and between discus-

(*Continued on page 69*)



"If you're Sylvia Sheldon," he said feebly, "you ought to know me! I thought—I expected—" "Love and kisses?" she asked.

SHE got out of the subway station at Columbus Circle and walked rapidly down Broadway. While she was waiting for the light to change at Fifty-seventh Street, she felt a touch on her shoulder. She started, then turned around to see the engaging smile on the face of a nice-looking young man change suddenly to a look of embarrassed confusion. "I'm dreadfully sorry," he said. "I—I thought you were someone else."

"That's all right," she answered.

"Even now," he said wonderingly—"even now that I see you aren't—I could almost swear— Well, at any rate, you're the image of her!"

"Who?" she asked curiously. "What's her name?"

"A Miss Sheldon," he said. "Sylvia Sheldon."

She looked at him a moment. "But I *am* Sylvia Sheldon," she said.

"You—" he said. "You're Sylvia Sheldon?"

"What's so amazing about that?" she asked. "You seemed to be so sure of it a moment ago."

"Yes—yes—of course," he said jerkily. "Could there—be two of you?"

"There might be any number," she said, "but I doubt if we all look alike."

"That's what I meant," he said feebly. "If you're Sylvia Sheldon, you ought to know me. That's why I thought I'd made a mistake. I thought—I expected—"

"Love and kisses?" she asked.

"Yes," he said firmly. "Love and kisses! You'd never have forgotten Jeffrey Albright!"

She smiled. "Jeffrey Albright," she repeated. "The name's familiar."

"Familiar? Sylvia! I mean, Miss Sheldon! I mean, whoever you are—"

"Just call me Madame X if you'd feel more comfortable."

"Don't," he pleaded. "I'm a little confused."

"You always were, Jeff," she said. "And you really thought I'd forgotten you?"

"Of course you're Sylvia," he said slowly.

"That's what I've been telling you," she said resignedly.

He folded her arm within his. "I need a drink," he said. "Badly."

"There's a lovely cocktail bar at Timothy's," she said.

"No," he said. "Let's go to—to our old place—you know."

But she was leading him across the street. "Timothy's is so much nearer," she said.

HE was now sure, of course, that she was lying. It was all very amusing in its way—not quite what he had anticipated, but certainly off the path of most encounters of this kind. She didn't look at all like a girl one might pick up readily. And yet she had practically picked *him* up when she said, "But I *am* Sylvia Sheldon." Now he knew that whatever he implied about their "past," she would have to recognize and accept—or drop the whole game. How long did she think this could be kept up?

The place was almost empty. Without consulting her, but with a smile that indicated clearly he hadn't forgotten, he ordered two old-fashioneds—one with Scotch, one

PICK-UP

It was strange he should see her again—but so much stranger that she should know him

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

BY HAROLD GOLDMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY MARTIN GULSER

with rye. Now the waiter brought the order to the table.

"Which for the lady?" he asked.

"I'm having the—the Scotch," she said.

"Oh, you've changed," Jeff said.

"Yes," she nodded. "It's a little smoother." She turned to the waiter. "And could you bring a package of cigarettes?"

She took a sip of her drink, then turned to him. "Now you've got to tell me everything! What you've been doing, where you've been."

"A lot's happened in five years," he murmured. "I suppose you know I got the divorce all right?"

"Yes," she said. "I heard."

How self-possessed she was, how adroit.

"And you never wrote," he muttered. "You left me hanging."

She seemed thoughtful. "I didn't know. I thought maybe you had forgotten. You—you sent no word."

"I wrote you dozens of letters!" he answered quickly—and then added, "But I never mailed them." He could sense her relief. "So now I'm free," he went on. "That was the one thing that stood between us. You made me face it all alone."

THE waiter came with the cigarettes.

Jeff watched her as she opened her bag and fumbled through it. She took out a dull-glimmering silver cigarette case of exquisite design. "This is for you," she said. "I—I just got it today. Almost"—she smiled—"almost as if I knew we were to meet again and this was to be a peace offering."

"For me?" he said.

"No," she said. "It was really for someone else. I couldn't resist it in the shop. But now it's for you."

"For me?" he repeated. There was no pretense to his astonishment now.

"Oh dear!" she said. "The price tag's still there!" She was rubbing at the tiny paper tag on the outside.

"Sylvia," he said slowly.

"Please don't," she said. "I love giving it to you. You—you always loved silver."

"Yes," he said, "I always loved silver." Numbly he put the case into his pocket.

The place brightened suddenly and was dim again. A man had come in from the street. He looked around the room, and then took a seat half facing them. She turned back to Jeff. "Let's not talk about the past," she said. "From now on, it's the future!"

JEFF drank the rest of his cocktail. Then he looked up to see the man who had just come in standing in front of them at the table.

"Sorry, folks," the man said. "Hate to interrupt, but I got to have a talk with the lady—Miss Mary Conway."

"Mary Conway?" Jeff said.

"Yeah, Mary Conway," said the man, "lives on East Eighty-ninth Street."

"What's all this about?" asked Jeff. "This is Miss Sylvia Sheldon."

"Take it easy, bud," said the man. "I'm trying to do this as nice as possible. I followed her all the way from Barkley Brothers to the Fiftieth Street subway station, then I lost her for a minute, but caught sight of her getting out at the Circle, watched her meet you on the street, and gave her time to get settled in a nice quiet place so there wouldn't be too much hubbub."

"What on earth are you talking about?" Jeff said. "I tell you this is Miss Sylvia Sheldon—my fiancée! I've known her intimately for five years. My name is Jeffrey Albright."

"You don't say," said the man. "Then maybe your fiancée wouldn't mind opening up that bag and showing me the sales check for an eighty-five-buck cigarette case that just happens to be there at this moment."

"I tell you you've made a mistake! This is ridiculous!" Jeff said.

"Just a minute," said the man. "She's been around a lot of times. We've had our eyes on her."

"Perhaps you'd like to search me!" she said.

"Let him see your bag, Sylvia," Jeff said quietly.

She hesitated a moment, then dumped the contents of the bag out on the table and, holding it wide, handed it over to the man. He ran his hand inside once or twice, then handed the bag back to her.

"How about me?" said Jeff.

"We can't do that. We can only go so far—and wait for the next time. There's always a next time," he added.

"Listen, my friend," said Jeff. "I assure you there's some mistake. you may have followed the right girl, then lost her in the subway and been sidetracked by a curious resemblance. Things like that do happen, you know." His eyes met hers for a split instant.

"You win, bud," said the man. "There's nothing I can do about it, even if you're wrong. My error." He walked out into the street.

The whole thing had gone very quietly. No one in the room had noted the scene with any particular interest. The girl was silent. Then, without moving, she said, "Thanks."

"He was wrong, wasn't he?" Jeff said.

"No," she said. "He was right. You know he was right."

"I meant about 'There's always a next time.' He was wrong, wasn't he?" His voice sounded tired, flat.

"Yes," she said, almost inaudibly. "He was wrong—on my—don't laugh—on my word of honor."

"I believe you," he said.

"Could I have a cigarette?" she said.

SHE sat back again, watching the thin line of smoke rising. "I suppose you'd like to know all about me—the true story."

"No. I'd like to keep it the way you said before—'Let's not talk about the past. From now on, it's the future.'"

"From this moment on," she whispered. It sounded like a prayer. Then she looked at him curiously. "Did you know from the beginning?"

"I didn't know why you were doing it," he said, "but I did know you weren't Sylvia Sheldon."

"Did I make a slip?"

"No," he admitted. "You were wonderful."

"Then why?" she asked. "You said I looked just like her. And still you thought I wasn't."

"I didn't think. I knew."

"But why?" she asked. "Why *couldn't* I have been Sylvia Sheldon?"

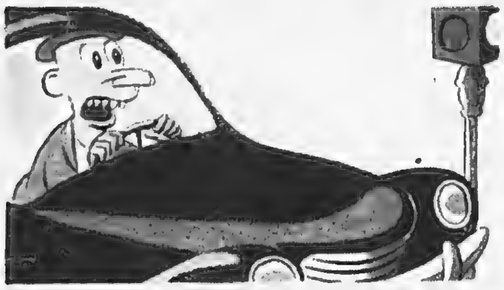
He looked at her and a little smile lifted the corners of his lips. "Because," he said, "there isn't any Sylvia Sheldon. I always use that name."

THE END

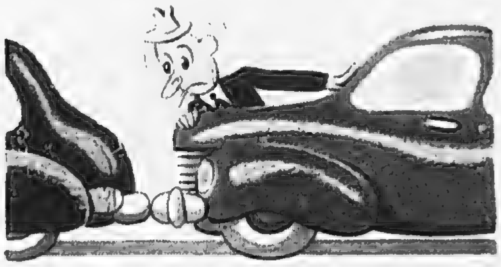
Road Blocks

These are the goons who keep motoring America's blood pressure and accident rate up

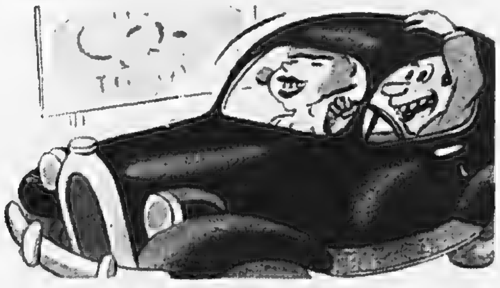
BY PHILIP and PHYLLIS NEWILL



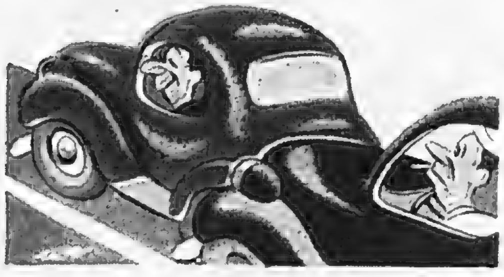
The jack-rabbit type. When the light changes he's off like a V-2. Occasionally these drivers bag a pedestrian.



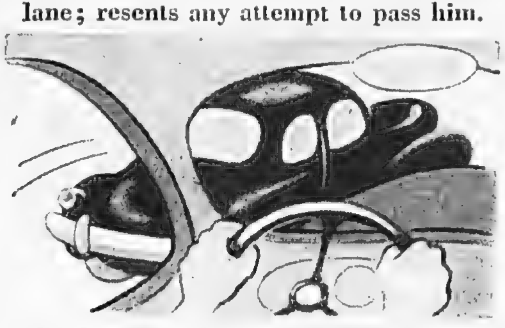
The parking stymie. You can't get out without a hoist. Man's inhumanity to man as expressed by some motorists.



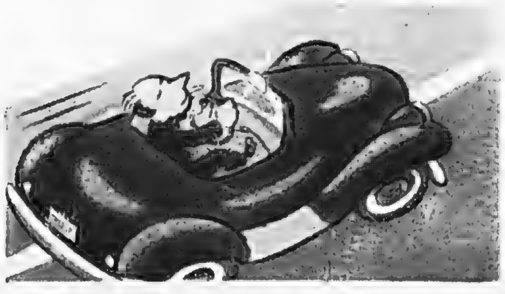
An emergency calls for both hands on the wheel. But Silly Sam clutches the roof, confuses the man behind him.



The Zombie of the Superhighways. He just mopes along in the speed lane; resents any attempt to pass him.



The broken-field runner. He cuts in and out of line, trying to pass, and is responsible for head-on crashes.



The casual soul. He likes to straddle the white line. He thinks it was put there for decoration—if he thinks.

THE two automobile drivers standing in the middle of the road yammering at each other are a favorite subject of cartoonists. Actually such situations are so true they aren't funny. They occur with depressing frequency in cities and villages, on highways and parkways, all because some people drive as though they were out to take an objective instead of a ride.

The thousands of fender bendings, near misses, name callings, and other misadventures that mar the enjoyment of motoring result primarily from a careless, ignorant, or stubborn disregard for the everyday precepts of highway etiquette.

Among motor-vehicle commissioners and others interested in the promotion of safer driving there is a growing concern that the increase in these lapses may assume epidemic proportions unless drivers do a right-about-face and start applying the same ordinary good manners that restrain folks from pushing each other off the sidewalk or grabbing the biggest piece of cake on the plate.

To begin with, there's the astonishingly rude performance commonly enacted at intersections where the traffic lights have an amber signal between the red and the green to enable those already part way across to complete the process before traffic starts rolling against them. However, the instant the red changes to amber, some jack rabbit is likely to lean on his horn in a furious effort to blast other cars out of his way and make pedestrians scurry for shore. Maybe Jack thinks any light that isn't red means it's his turn to jump; but even if he were right, his hurry-up-and-get-out-of-my-way attitude would still be wrong.

A somewhat more reckless combination of bad manners and disregard for regulations is the game of Beat the Lights, regularly played on city streets during the interval when the signals show red in all directions. In a real championship match, ladies and gentlemen, you have bearing down on one corner the Incumbent, who thinks he can get across the intersection before the light goes green the other way; and on the opposite corner you have the Challenger, who leaps into action the second his opponent's light turns red. The player who gets hit broadside, loses. Of course you lose, too, if you have the misfortune to be ahead of the Incumbent and stop obediently when the light goes against you. He'll slam into your rear and then bawl you out.

These same Danny Dashaways dote on whipping around curves at speeds which are apt to throw them into side-swiping skids, and the squeal of their tortured tires may well be termed the Call of the Road Hog. They also love to splash through mud, grunting, "Look out, why don'tcher?" to any unwary citizen they succeed in splattering. Not for them the gradual easing up to intersections and around curves with a gentle intermittent pressure of brakes. Nor will you ever catch a Dashaway stopping back of the building line so pedestrians won't have to circle around him, or remaining seven or eight feet behind an open trolley-car door in order to allow passengers to get on or off without scampering like hunted things. Not unless you're wearing a badge, you won't.

Parking rules such as those requiring one to stay ten to fifteen feet away from hydrants, and to leave a car not more than six inches from the curb are usually obeyed because their infraction leads to a ticket. But there are many parking offenses which That Man in Blue is powerless to do anything about—such as the infuriating trick of suddenly spotting a parking place and backing right in—zip!—without tipping off one's plans to those behind. (A good driver will pull up close to and parallel with the car ahead of the space, signaling that he is going to stop, then wait until the coast is clear before backing in.)

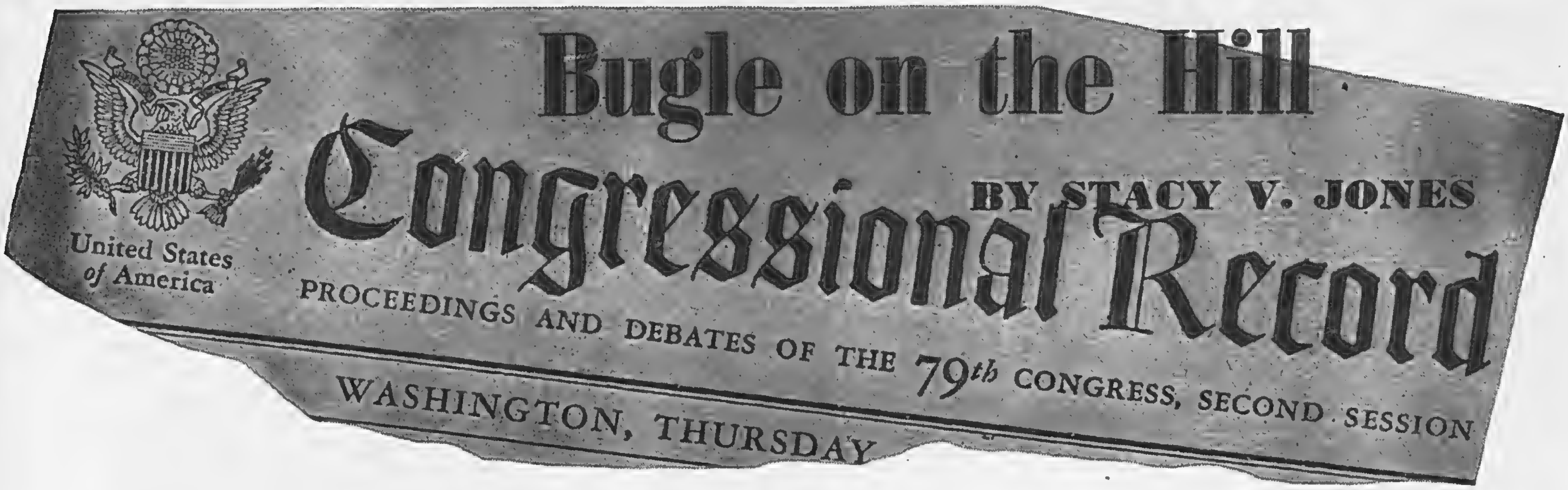
And how many times have you left your car in a nice big open space, only to find when you returned that subsequent parkers had put their cars to bed bumper to bumper with yours, both front and rear, so you couldn't get out without a hoist? A considerate driver will no more leave his car so as to box in another than

(Continued on page 58)

CARTOONS BY BILL O'BRIAN

Bugle on the Hill

BY STACY V. JONES



United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 79th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY

The Congressional Record publishes everything from wacky poetry and recipes to earth-shaping debates and, lacking even a pin-up girl or Dick Tracy, is avidly read

THE nation's most influential daily publication has a staff of more than 500 part-time reporters and no editor. It has no payroll to meet, for Uncle Sam foots the bills —which come to more than $800,000 a year. Nor does it have to sell advertising space or solicit subscriptions. And it never has a manpower shortage. What's more, its staff, subject to certain restrictions on space and name-calling, writes as it pleases. And in spite of its lack of such eye-catching devices as illustrations and startling headlines, it gets read.

The publication is the Congressional Record, which chronicles the day's debates, squabbles, and legislation in both houses of Congress.

But the Record also carries juicy cuts of Americana with as straight a face as it does an important speech in the Senate on foreign policy or a debate on an amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

In it you can find homespun poetry, recipes for turnip greens and hog's jowls, editorials reprinted from the home-town newspapers of congressmen, backwoods philosophy, and many undelivered speeches. A good deal of the folksy copy is flapdoodle at its worst, but it gets into the Congressional Record just the same.

The reporters—the 435 representatives and 96 senators, together with the Alaskan and Hawaiian delegates and the resident commissioners of the Philippines and Puerto Rico—work hard at their assignments—writing about themselves. But, unlike newspaper reporters, the Record's are all on their own. They send their copy direct to the composing room and let the printers worry about it. And considering the material they have to wrestle with, the printers do a good job. But absence of an editorial pencil does make for some odd situations.

House proceedings in the Record last December 19, for instance, carried speeches by two members. The speeches ran on for 1,500 words each and were identical, even to subheads. The speakers were John E. Rankin, the stormy Mississippi Democrat, and Edith Nourse Rogers, the Republican gentlewoman from Massachusetts. They were talking about the servicemen's readjustment act of 1944. Obviously both had leaned rather heavily on the same source.

The daily Record, now in its seventy-fourth year, consists of three parts: proceedings of the Senate, proceedings of the House of Representatives, and the Appendix. The last has been called an elastic ragbag. Into it goes everything that doesn't belong anywhere else.

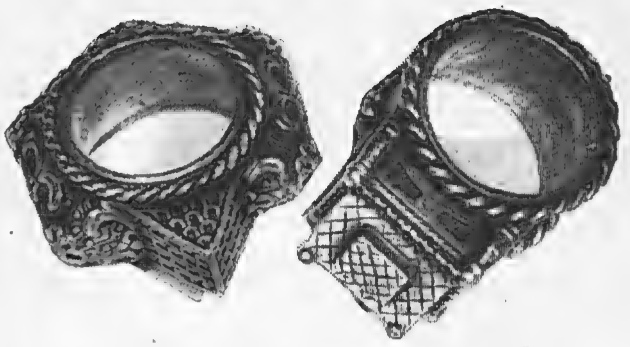
The law provides that the Record shall be substantially a verbatim report of proceedings, but in practice about half of what it records is never delivered on the floor. The Senate is small enough so that everybody can be heard; but not so the House, whose members couldn't possibly say all they want on the floor.

So a representative asks unanimous consent to address the House for one minute and to revise and extend his remarks. He can then write out and insert 300 words at that point in the proceedings, or if the day's business has been concluded, there's no limit. At any rate, he can insert up to two pages in the Appendix, and more with special permission.

The representatives get the lion's

(*Continued on page* 53)

Public Printer A. E. Giegengack in the press room. He is in charge of all government printing as well as Capitol Hill's home-town newspaper.



Ancient Jewish wedding ring.

Ancient Hebrew wedding ring.

"With This Ring . . ."

BY ELEANOR HITESHEW

THE man hasn't been found who would dare lead his bride to the altar without producing a wedding ring to seal the compact. The Pharaohs are believed to have been the first to use a circle as a symbol of eternity—a sign that life, love, and happiness have no beginning and no end. Be that as it may, the custom is so firmly established that it has created a $10,000,000-a-year business.

And the practice of slipping a band over the bride's eager finger is so deeply rooted in sentiment that not even a national emergency can stop it. The War Production Board tried it at the outset of the war and got itself a massive headache as a result.

Gold was badly needed in the war effort, but the minute WPB issued its no-gold-for-wedding-rings ban, there were howls of protest from every direction, including the pulpit. WPB did a quick about-face and permitted unlimited supplies for making wedding bands.

Wartime did a lot of things to the wedding-ring business. The demand for plain gold bands outstripped that for any other type. And the double-ring ceremony shot up from 15 per cent of all marriages to 85 per cent. And the trade, already crazy with production problems, had no hand in that. Men slated for overseas just wanted some tangible reminder of their marital status. It was jake with wartime brides, too, for it served to notify the foreign competition that there was a little woman waiting back home.

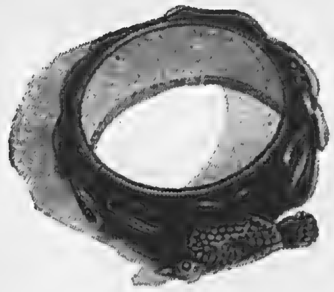
And 50 per cent of all the money spent in wartime for wedding rings was passed over the counter by the brides-to-be. Men in training camps had no time to help select the cherished band. In many instances they were fortunate if they got home long enough to have the marital knot tied. In normal times, however, the betrothed and her intended usually go into a huddle on the ring. Not infrequently the girl will have cased a jewelry store beforehand and tipped off the jeweler what he is to bring out.

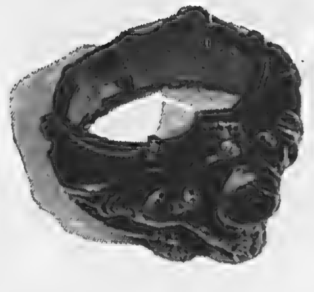
What should you pay for a wedding ring? Almost anything from five dollars for a thinnish gold band to as much as $5,000 for one with all the trimmings. You can even find one glorified with a diamond—a very small diamond—for twenty-five dollars. But one with jewels all the way around will set the boy friend back anywhere from $1,000 and up.

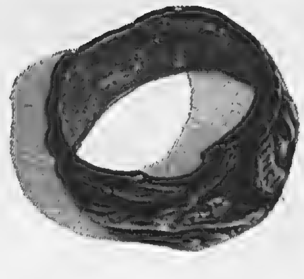
Some couples are so self-conscious about selecting a ring that they are likely to grab the first one shown. Then there are the couples overwhelmed by the importance of the occasion. They just can't make up their minds. Or the coy type. They are usually the ones slated for a second marriage.

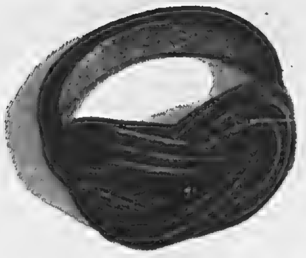
Trends in wedding-ring metals reflect to a startling degree the tempo of the times. Various metals have flurries of popularity with gold—white, yellow, pink or green—having been fairly standard for decades. But it's yellow gold that

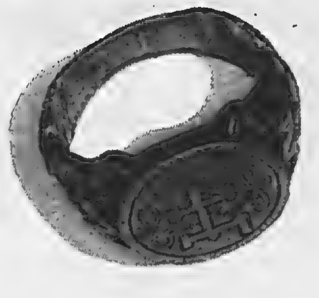
Chasing the ring: The trade term for hand engraving done by a skilled craftsman.


Ancient Roman wedding ring.


Martin Luther wedding ring.


Martin Luther's wife's ring.


Early Grecian—about 1000 B.C.


Ring of Mary Queen of Scots.

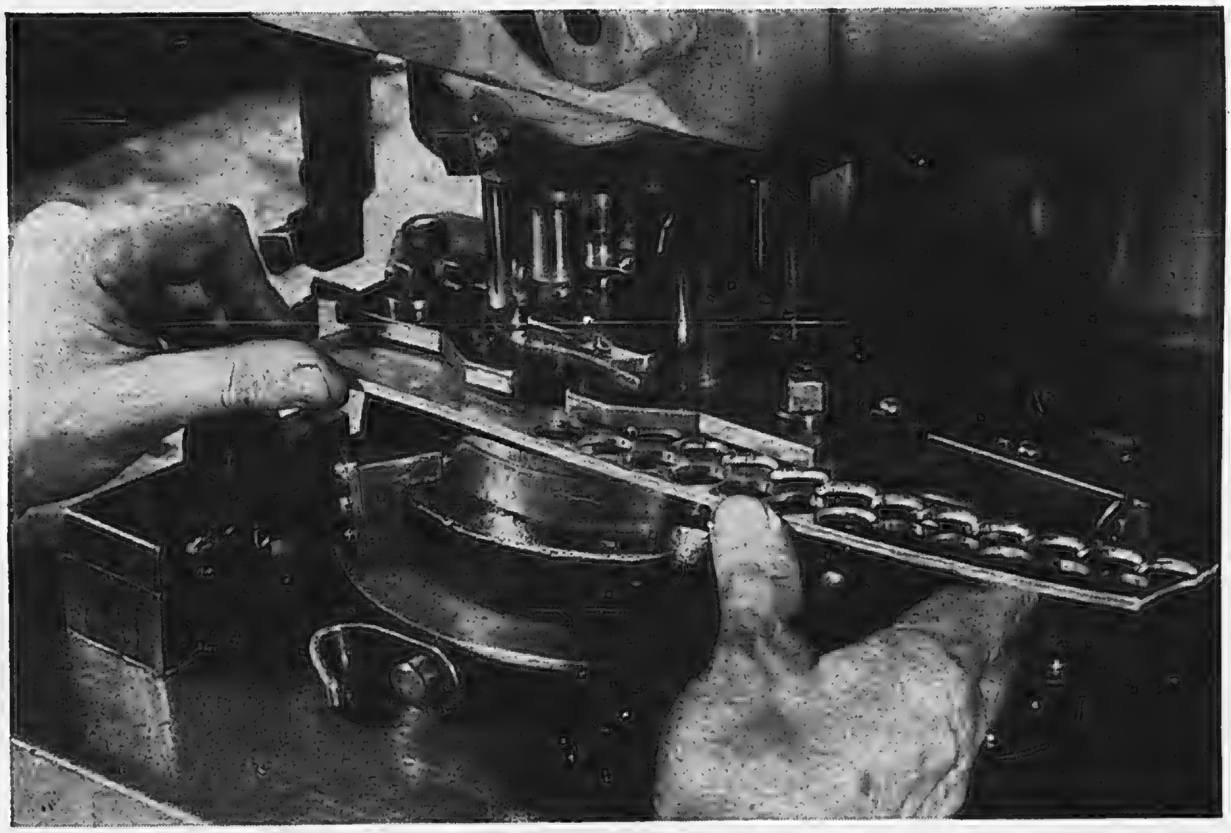
attracts the most buyers whenever the public is going through a return to the simpler things in life. After the first World War, for instance, most wedding bands were being made of yellow gold. But the reaction set in with prohibition and the glittering nonsense of the '20s. Platinum became the rage. It was glittery and its steep price tag gave its wearers that expensive feeling. Gold nose-dived and almost disappeared from the markets.

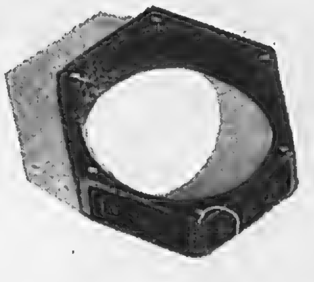
Then the stock-market crash brought the public up short. Life once more became real and earnest. The gold wedding band returned. Gradually, however, this serious-minded interlude loosened up and platinum edged in once more. The next great surge back to yellow gold came when we went off the gold standard. Gold possessions assumed special importance and gold marriage bands looked pretty good.

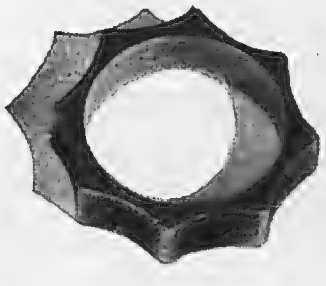
Trends in styles have always tallied pretty well with trends in metals. Old ring catalogues put out by wholesalers like J. R. Wood and Sons, largest manufacturers of wedding rings, show that in 1850, women were going in for the gold band that was nearly half an inch wide. By 1900, however, the circlet had narrowed down until it was a wisp of its former self. As diamond engagement rings became best sellers, they moved to the front of the catalogues, and wedding rings (still gold) were relegated to the back pages. Then platinum hit the market. It had been kicking around since the early 1700s, but not until around 1900 did the facilities for working it become available. With platinum's commercial debut came the jeweled wedding ring, and if the old-fashioned girl still wanted gold, it was apt to be fancied up—carved into grape clusters or bouquets of edelweiss. Then during World War II it was back to great-grandma's

(Continued on page 67)

Centuries ago an ancient Egyptian slipped the first wedding ring on a bride's finger. Because of him, a $10,000,000-a-year industry exists in the U. S. Today there are other things you may not know about the band that binds

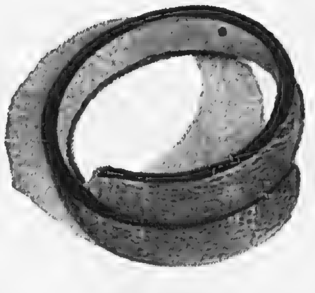

Punching. A bar of gold is placed under the punching press which stamps out the rough ring forms. The remaining form is returned to the melter to be mixed with other gold for a new bar.


15th-century French ring.


Grecian, dedicated to Apollo.

Gallo-Roman—fifth century

Engagement-wedding ring, French

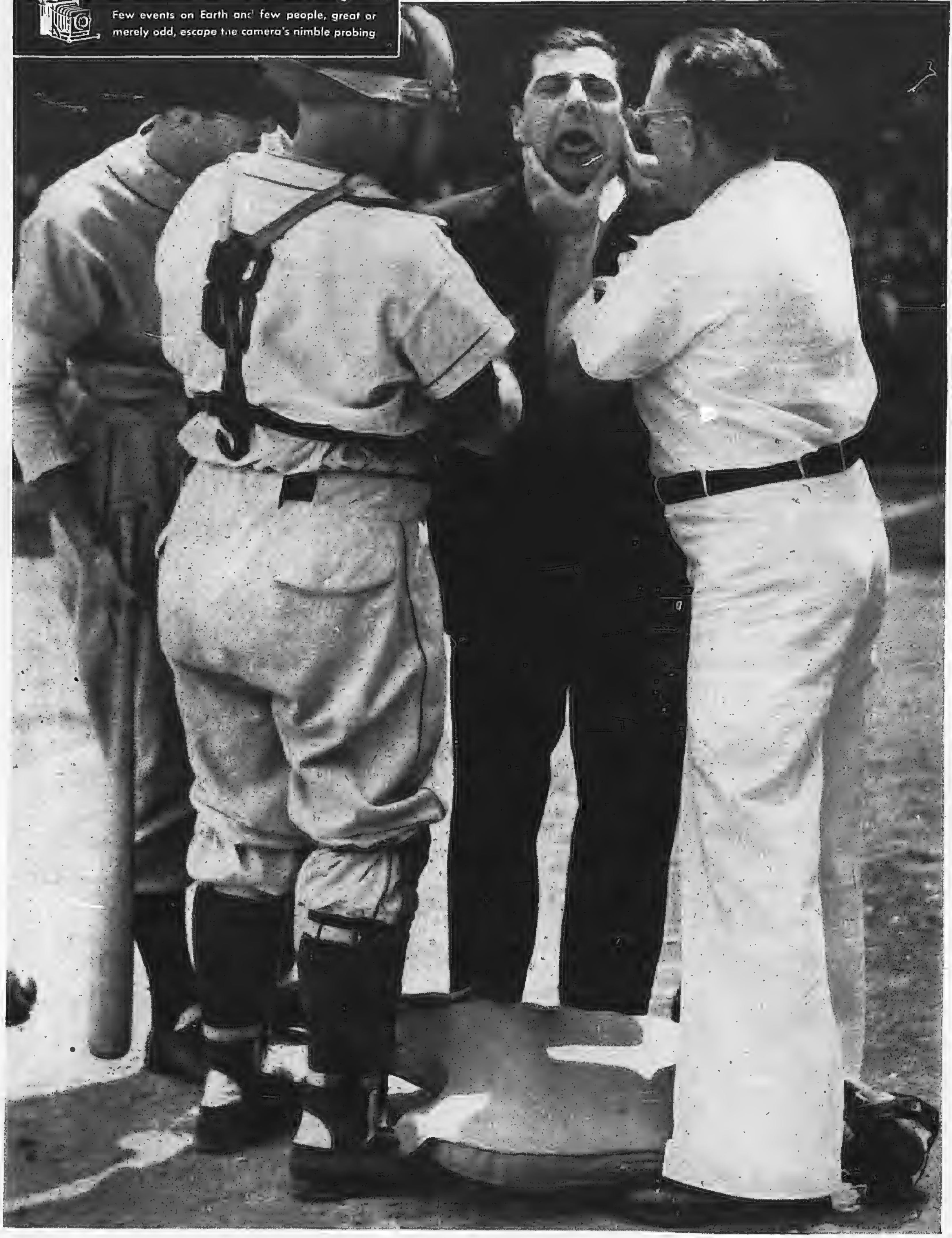

The Saxon wedding ring.

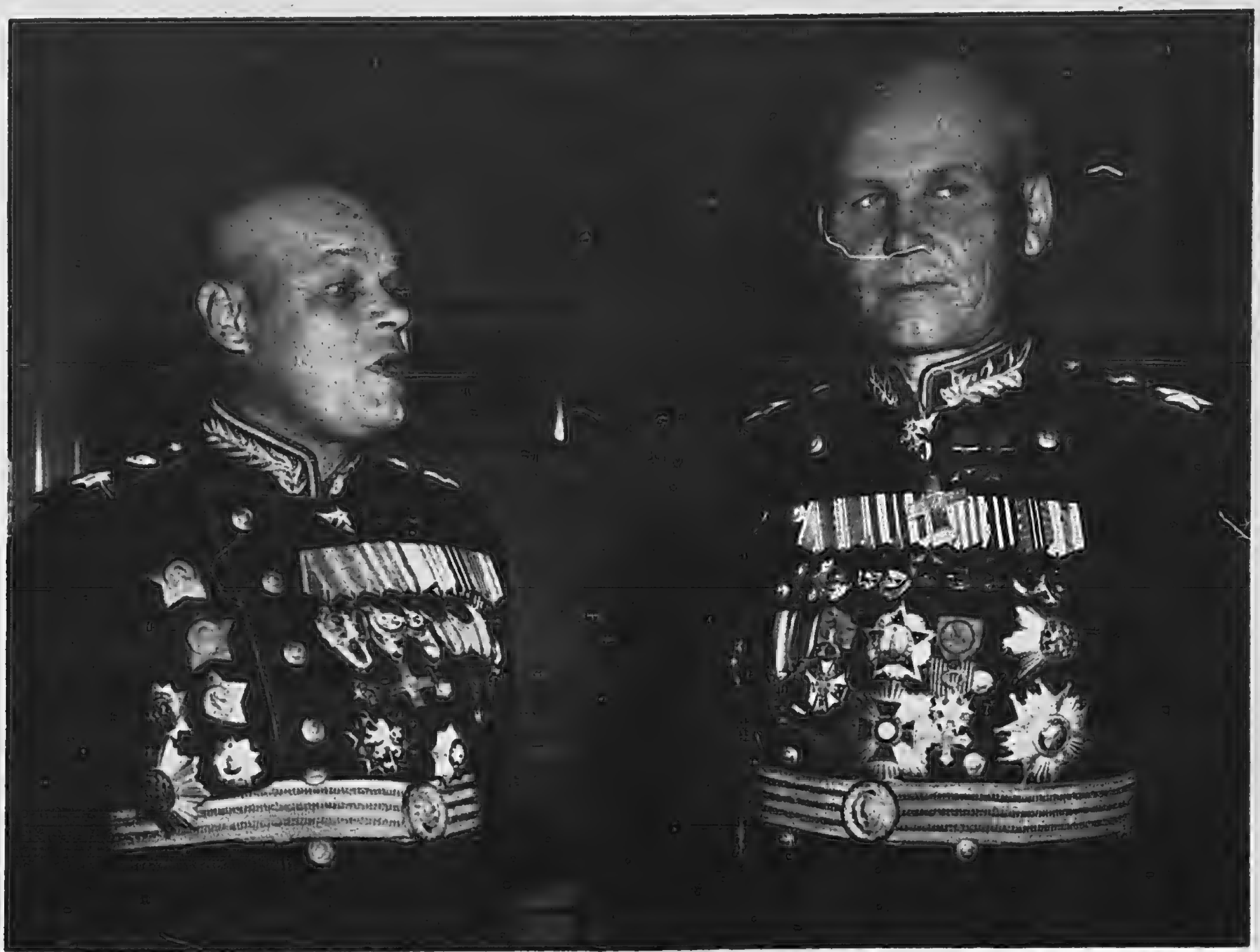
The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

WELL, SHUT MAH MOUTH!—Umpire Art Pasarella was calling them at home plate when a foul tip from the bat of Mickey Vernon, Washington Senators' first baseman, dislocated his jaw, making it impossible for him to close his mouth. A moment later he was rushed to the hospital and the medics quickly shut his loud-speaker for him.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO



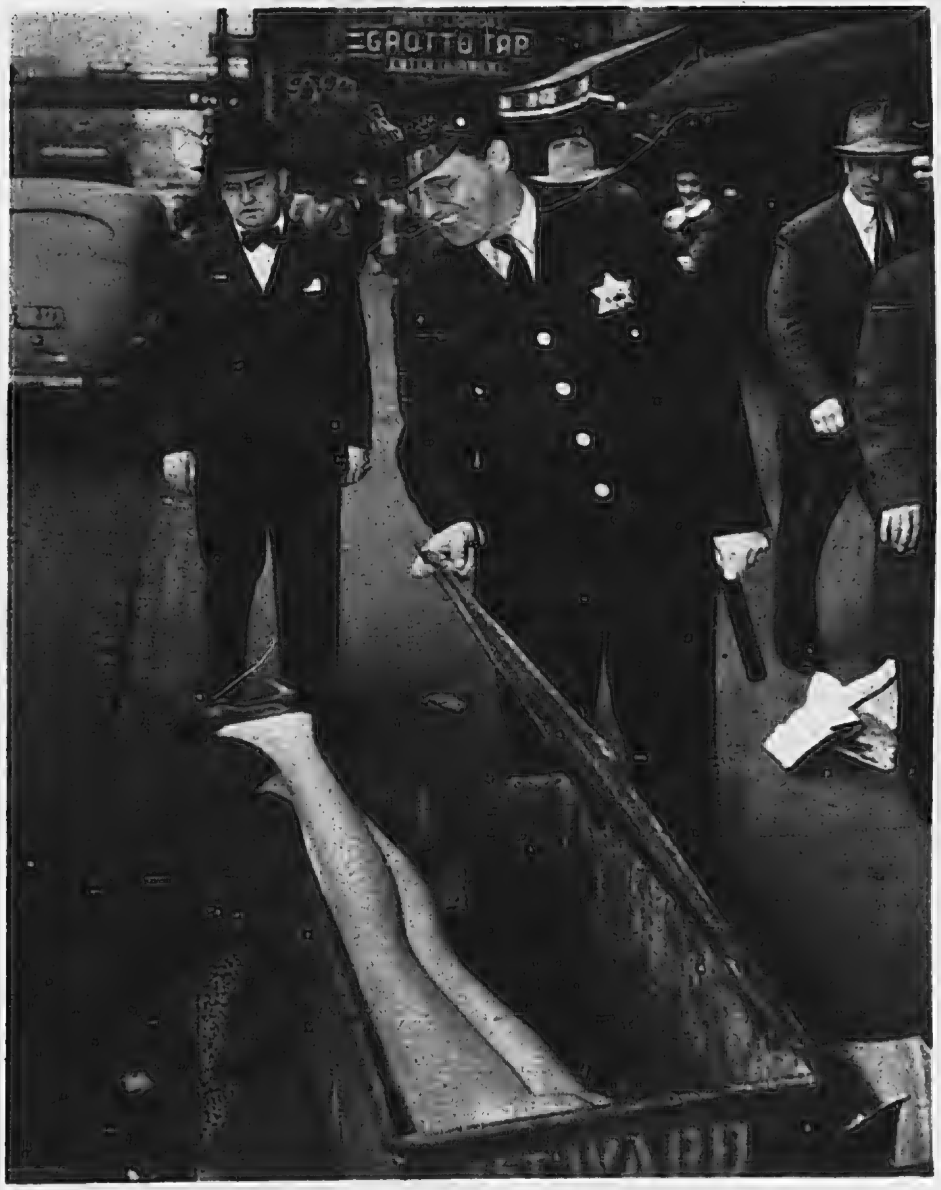


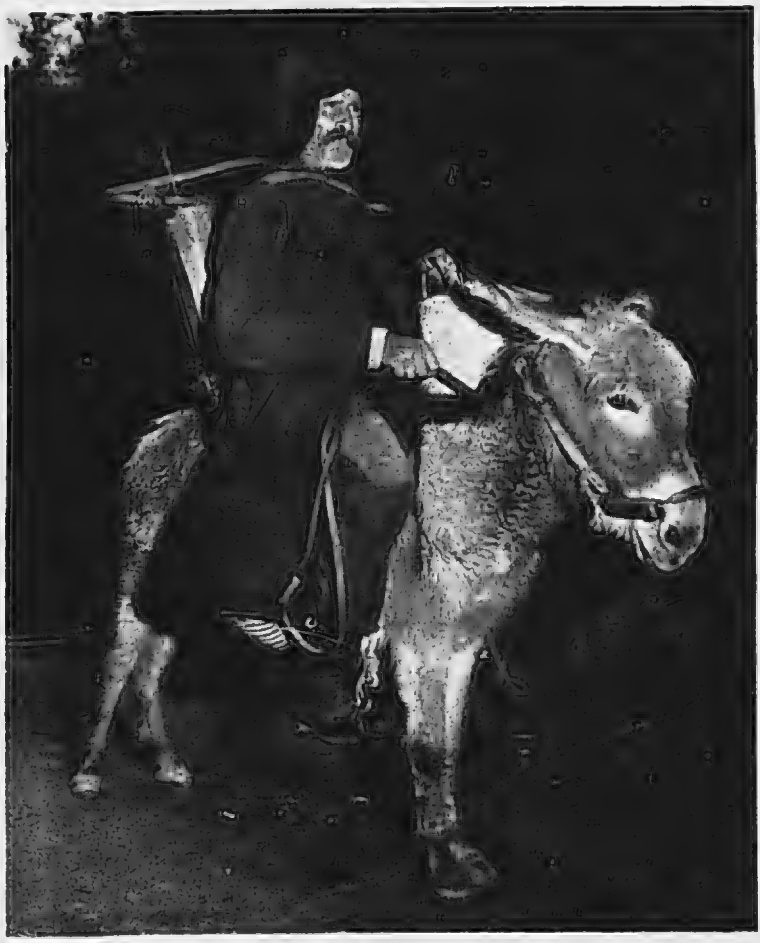
PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

SOVIET MARSHALS STEP OUT—This splendiferous display of medals is strictly for receptions. Marshal Koniev (right), commander of the First Ukrainian Army, which liberated Prague, and his aide, Marshal Rybalko, attend a reception in Prague given by President Benes in observance of the first anniversary of the liberation of Prague.

MURDER IN THE LOOP — Chicago police feared a ghastly crime until the lid was lifted and the well-heeled figure proved to be a discarded wax dummy. A spectator appears to be spellbound by the "corpse."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO





SARDINIA JEEP—This aged peasant astride his small mount appears as a pilgrim on a journey from the Biblical past.

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

That night on a fog-shrouded deck, Walt discovered the sea was still strange and implacable—too deep for the scientific mind

The Sea Is a Funny Place, Mister

BY RICHARD HOWELLS WATKINS

ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON GRANT

YOUNG Walt Hartley, junior third mate, glanced sideways at the massive head of big Gunnar Mattsen, chief mate, as they swung along the dark and narrow street that led down to the jetties in the little Cornish harbor. Mr. Mattsen was still chuckling over the movie. "The funniest part was where—" He stopped.

The pub they were passing had suddenly spewed out a coatless man. He was closely followed by the publican himself.

"An' stay out this time, matey," said the landlord earnestly. "You've 'ad too much an' you didn't 'ave it 'ere."

The dim light from the pub window showed a ragged black-and-white beard and long knobby arms that jerked spasmodically as the drunk's legs dissolved under him like limp strands of macaroni.

Next instant more men boiled out of the pub, headed by a tall fellow in sea boots whose English had a French edge to it.

"You throw him out; we throw him in again!" he shrieked, and jerked the prostrate man upright. Fighting men swirled suddenly around him.

"Come on!" Gunnar Mattsen shouted to Walt. He bored in toward the tall Frenchman. His hard fist swung upward and broke the man's grip on the back of the bearded one's neck. He caught the drunk by both shoulders as he sagged.

Walt, following closely, shoved the Frenchman deep into the mob of scuffling men. Ready fists received him.

"Grab an arm!" Mattsen commanded. With the drunk almost dangling between them, they ran around the corner and ducked into the first alley. They stumbled out of it into another street unpursued. Their captive had gone to sleep.

Mattsen was rumbling with pleasure.

"It's Al Gurk," he said.

"Who's Al Gurk?"

"An A.B. I was shipmates with during the war."

Walt glowed. Rescuing an old shipmate—good going.

"Here!" said Mattsen. He halted beside a trough where carters watered their horses and let Gurk sag to the sidewalk. Cupping his hand, he bailed water vigorously into the bearded face.

Gurk's clothes were a mess. Plainly he had been on the tear for days. His head weaved feebly. He sputtered and opened his eyes. "B'lay that!" he protested thickly. "Wha' doing?"

"Got a ship, Gurk?" Mattsen demanded, still throwing water.

"No ship," gasped Gurk. "Got nothing."

He fended off the water with his thick-jointed arms.

Mattsen cut off the water.

"Bring your papers to the Paul A. Sebring in the morning," the mate said. "She's loading at the jetties. We'll sign you on. Get it?"

"Paul A. Sebring," Gurk repeated.

Mattsen scooped a few shillings and sixpences from his pocket, poured them into Gurk's hand, and clapped his other hand over the money. "Get a bed," he said. "Come on, Hartley."

He walked away. Walt craned his neck. Gurk was hanging onto the horse trough.

"What d'you want with an old drunk like that?" Walt asked. His ardor had cooled. "Think he'll come?"

"Sure he'll come. He wants a ship. He ain't at home on the beach."

"A good seaman, Mr. Mattsen?"

"Good enough."

"Has one of our A.B.s jumped ship?"

The mate shook his head. "We're not short-handed, but the Old Man will take Gurk. Anybody would."

They started across the clay-smeared rails that carried the gray earth to the ship side.

"Why?" Walt asked.

"Al Gurk made the North Atlantic run the whole war."

"A hero?" Walt said. He knew Mattsen himself had been torpedoed.

Mattsen snorted at the word. "While other guys were getting it four or five times, not one of Gurk's ships got bumped or bombed. Been at sea all his life and never had any trouble."

Walt slanted a look at him.

"He's lucky," Mattsen said. "He has the name for it."

TO Walt, Gunnar Mattsen's feet suddenly turned to clay—and not china clay, either.

"You're not—superstitious?" His question was a protest.

"Not me," said Mr. Mattsen. "I don't go for that stuff. But Gurk is lucky. There's no doubt about it. Once—I was in the ship ahead, same column—a torp went past his bow by ten feet and blew blazes out of a high-octane tanker way inside the convoy. He was at the wheel at the time, too."

"Probably off course," Walt said, sharply sarcastic.

"I think he was holding a little to the south'ard," Mattsen replied.

They rounded a line of dinky little railway cars dripping with wet clay. Walt tried again. "You don't really think Gurk would bring luck to the Sebring?" he asked.

The poorly disguised disgust in his voice made Mattsen turn his head to squint at him.

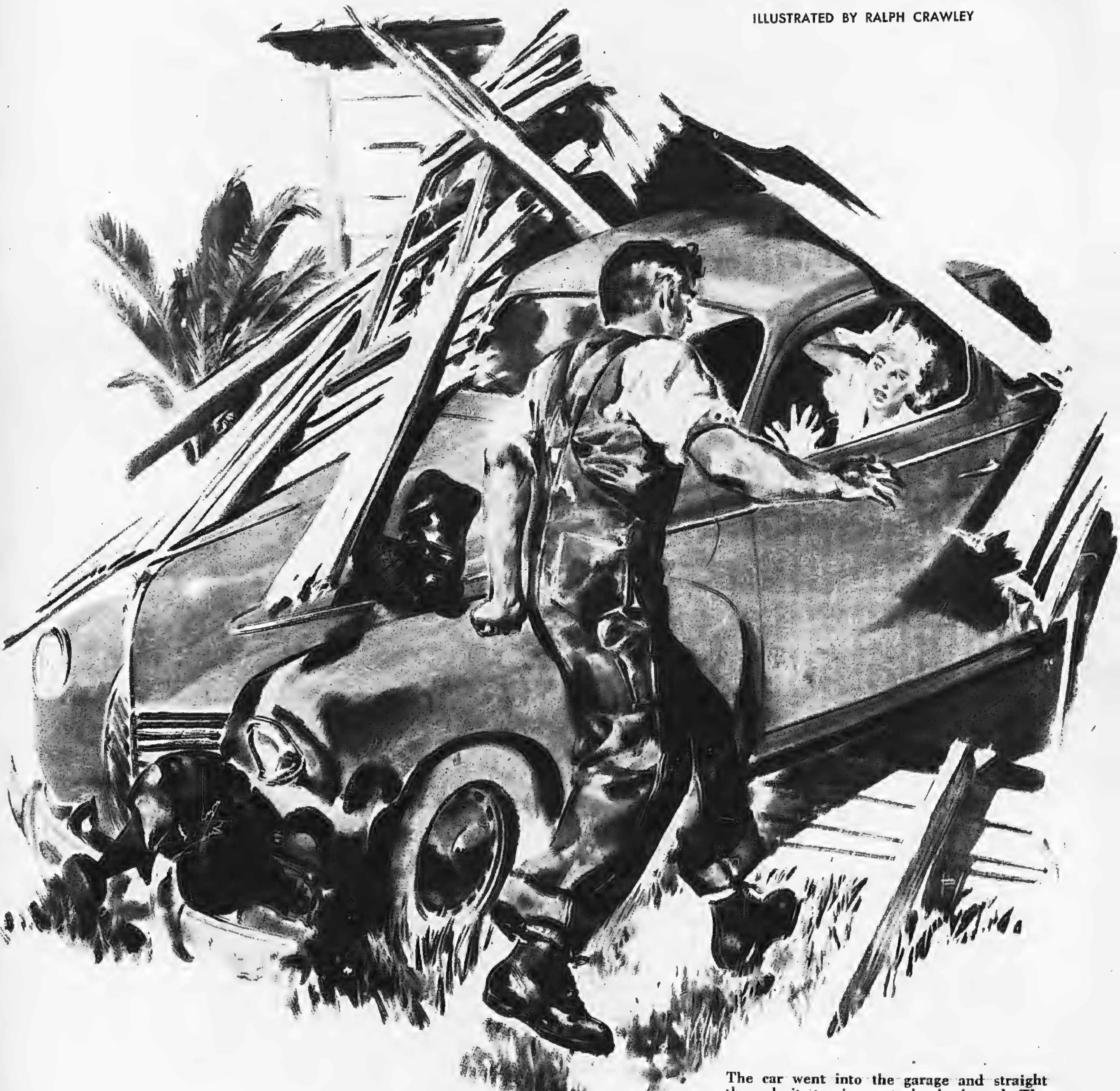
(*Continued on page 71*)

A black smooth thing—enormous, rounded—rising from the sea. "Left!" he shouted, jerking his head toward the wheelhouse door. "Hard over!"

Designing Widow

BY SAMUEL W. TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY RALPH CRAWLEY



The car went into the garage and straight through it, tearing out the back end. The widow was scared, a bit dazed, but unhurt. "I pushed and nothing happened," she said.

"Marriage!" snorted Wilpert. "Some guys are made for it and some ain't. All I want is some peace and quiet." But next door, the widow was listening

WORD got around the neighborhood that the Sharon place had been sold again, this time to a man named Wilpert. He moved in on a Saturday in the early spring, hauling his stuff in a homemade trailer. Next day he was settled, had his name painted on the mailbox out front, and was out edging his driveway with red brick. Word got around that Wilpert worked for a wholesale drug outfit in San Francisco—steady man, been there fourteen years—was divorced, had originally come from Nebraska, and was figuring on fixing up the coops on the place and getting some baby chicks and maybe going in for chickens and quitting his job, if things panned out. A lot of information can be had from a real-estate agent, and in a country district the neighbors always like to know about a new man.

The neighborhood approved. Folks in the district didn't go much for the country-gentleman type who'd been buying in of late. They'd been building elaborately rustic ranch-type houses with tile patios, and moving full-grown oaks and palms the way you'd transplant a bush, and putting up walls and iron gates, and throwing their money around. This man Wilpert was just good common folks.

"But it's too bad," the neighbors decided. "Somebody had ought to tell him."

The Sharon place needed a man like Wilpert, too. Somebody to fix it up. It had got pretty well run down. The trouble with it was that somehow it never appealed to women. It was the sort of place a handy man wants, to fix up and have chickens and fruit and a garden. That was the trouble—Wilpert was another bachelor.

So Harris dropped by Sunday afternoon. That's Hal Harris, who has the place down by the big eucalyptus. Harris walked along the road casual like, paused idly to watch Wilpert butter a couple of bricks with mortar and set them in place, and said, "I'm Harris."

"I'm Wilpert."

"Nice neighborhood."

"I like it."

"Met your neighbors?"

"Seen the names on the mailboxes is all." Wilpert nodded south and north. "Rhigetti and Calhoun."

"Widow Calhoun is a fine woman," Harris said, leading into it delicately. "Still young; attractive, too."

"Just a minute, neighbor," Wilpert said. He arose, a brick in one hand and the trowel in the other. He was a pretty big man, somewhere around forty. "I'm a stranger here and I don't want to get off on the wrong foot. But I bought this place for peace and quiet and seclusion, and I don't give a personal hoot in hell about who the widow is or how fine she is or how attractive. I'm through with women, widow or married, single or divorced, blonde or redhead, fat or thin, white or black, drunk or sober."

Harris was a bit taken about by this outburst. This Wilpert seemed a peaceful sort of guy, but all of a sudden his voice had come loud.

"Well—that's fine, Wilpert," Harris said hastily. "I know you'll like it here. And I hope you stay."

"Stay? Of course I'll stay," Wilpert said, kneeling again at his work. "Bought this place. I like it. Needs a lot of work, but I got a good price." Then he cocked an eye upward. "Why shouldn't I stay?"

"You must of had some trouble with women," Harris said.

"Women?" Wilpert jabbed furiously at his mortar. "Sixteen years and a hundred and twenty-four days of hell. That's how long I was married. Some guys are made for it and some ain't. And now all I want is some peace and quiet."

"That's a long time to be married."

"Too long. Why shouldn't I stay?"

"Yep, a nice little place you got here," Harris said. "Fix it up. Needs a handy man. An owner. You know how renters are. Sharon, he had this place quite a spell. About twelve year, it was, before the Widow Calhoon moved in next door. Sharon was a great gardener. Should of seen how the place was then. How nice. Then she moved in. He fixed her garden hose one day. Just put a washer in the connection. Too bad."

WILPERT'S eye came up from the brickwork; he was paying rapt attention.

Harris said, "Yep, Sharon, he used to spade the whole place twice a year. Loved his shrubs and flowers. Fooled with rare iris. You should of seen his orchard and the grapes. Had some chinchilla rabbits and some chickens, and sold his iris to the nurseries. Then he fixed her garden hose. Sold out to a fellow named Bigelow. Got too much for him. Lasted about eight months."

"What got too much for him?"

"Still working, Sharon is," Harris said sadly. "Cooped up in a city apartment. Now, Bigelow, he lasted through the summer. I remember what started it with him. The widow, she come over and had him nail her mailbox on the post. Got blowed off in the wind. So he sold out to a fellow named Ross. Ross was a worker. You should of seen Ross work around the place. But he sold out to a carpenter, name of Franklin. Franklin started in to remodel the house—you can see where he staked out another bedroom. Far as he got. The widow was having some trouble with leaky taps. They dripped. So then Franklin moved away, and it was renters after that. You know how renters are. A shame, too. Always something to be fixing around a place in the country. That woman had ought to be married up to some handy man. Well, Wilpert, I hope you stay."

"Thanks, Harris," Wilpert said. "Thanks a million. And don't worry none about me. I'll stay. But thanks for the tip."

"A very sweet woman," Harris said. "Some say she's attractive. And one thing about it. Out here, Wilpert, we never gossip. We never say anything about our neighbors."

SO Wilpert knew what to expect. That evening he was out back in his lean-to shop, trimming a sticking door with a smooth plane, when the Widow Calhoon came over.

"Oh, Mr. Wilpert, I don't want to bother you, and I know you're busy, and it's an awful thing for me to ask when we hardly know each other and all, but I wonder if you've got a pinchy thing that twists that thing around on an engine?" she said.

Mr. Wilpert turned to see a smallish woman, doll-like and helpless, with short yellow curls all over her head like a baby's and big blue eyes. She must have been in her middle thirties but she didn't look it.

"A pinchy thing that turns what around?" he asked. "How do you do?"

"I'm Mrs. Calhoon. Well, if you haven't got it, thanks anyhow a million. I'm sorry to butt in like this, because I know you're awfully busy getting settled and all. I just thought maybe you'd have one."

"Have what?"

"I know it's the same thing. The last time, a man came from the garage and he took a pinchy thing and twisted that thing around on the engine and the car started right away and never gave a bit of trouble until now. Do you think he broke something?"

"Oh, your car."

"I don't trust these mechanics; do you? Now it won't start. They always leave something off. You'd think when he fixed it once, it would stay fixed. Or do you think it's the windshield wiper? I had to get a new one last winter."

There was something about her helplessness that others, to their sorrow, had found somehow appealing. But Wilpert was made of sterner stuff. Maybe his recent disaster in matrimony had casehardened him.

(*Continued on page 76*)

Fun for all ages – thanks to
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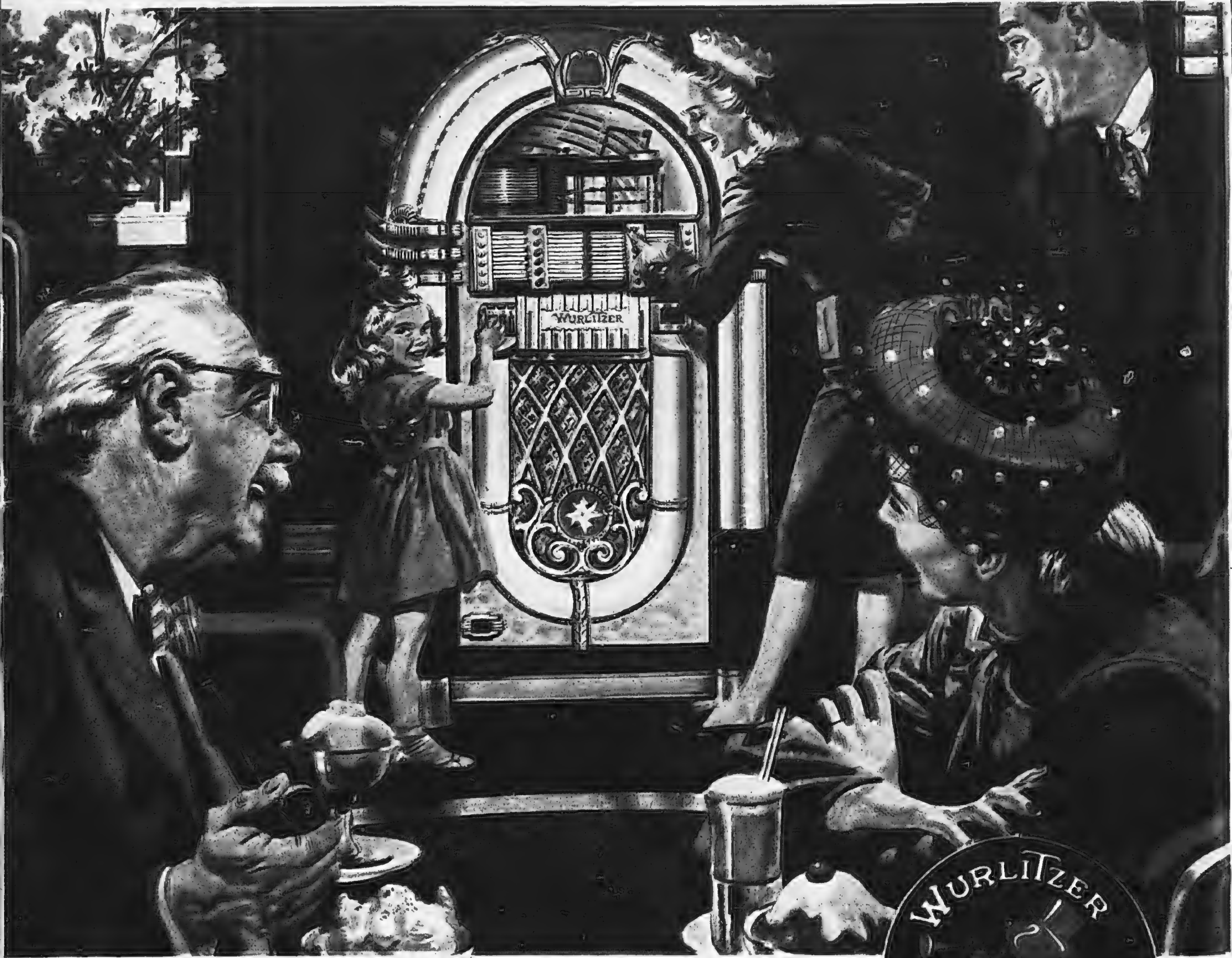

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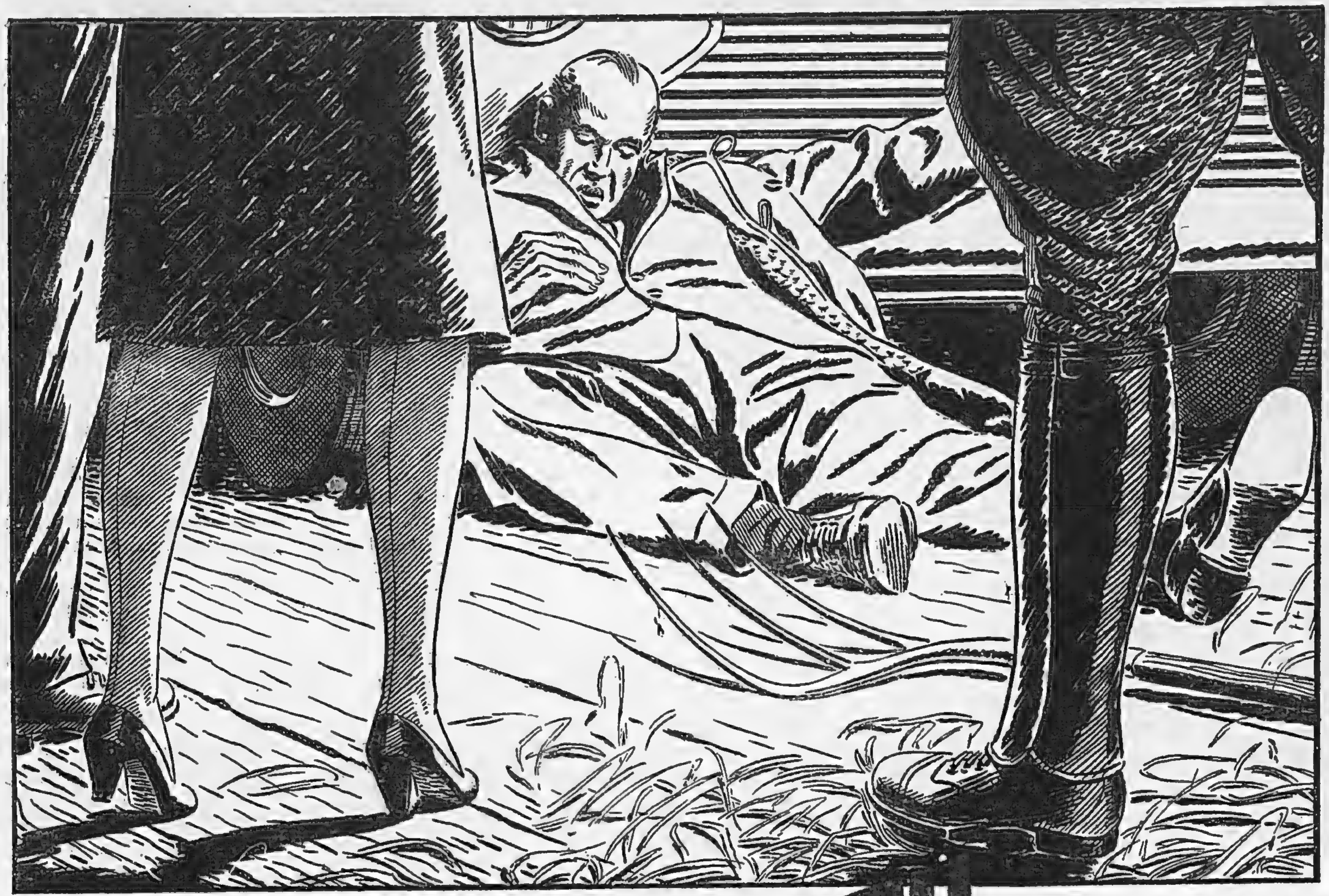

GRIMM DEATH

BY DOROTHY FOSTER BROWN

ILLUSTRATED BY MARTIN GULSER

The bloody pitchfork that lay beside him on the floor of an eerie New England barn had killed despised Deacon Grimm. Called in as sleuth, likable Sergeant Brett found no dearth of suspects, but they wouldn't talk—not until another murder and an attempted murder took place. This fast-moving mystery has an unexpected twist that will keep readers guessing.

A LIBERTY BOOK CONDENSATION · *READING TIME: ONE EVENING*

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TWO people and a cat kept each other company in the Pattersons' sitting room, looking with uneasy eyes from the clock to the door, to each other and back again.

"They ought to be here soon," Lucy Patterson said.

She was an attractive woman in her early thirties, with fluffy brown hair and bright eyes. Though pale and slightly rumpled at present, she had lost only a little of her natural self-possession—a quality which twelve years as a farmer's wife had intensified.

Ann Barbour lighted a cigarette. "They can't make very good time when it's so slippery."

Ann was younger than Lucy, and less settled-looking. Tonight her face looked strained and tired, but there was something curiously appealing about her—a remote, unobtrusive charm.

Lucy moved uneasily. "I wish Frank was here." Frank was her husband, and it was about the sixtieth time she had wished it during the last hour. He was a hundred miles away at an Odd Fellows' Convention.

They waited. Outside, the wind howled dismally; and, in the pauses between gusts, the telephone wires hummed with loud, persistent monotony. The minutes dragged, and the house was full of inexplicable noises.

Suddenly the women heard the squeal of brakes in the yard, the bang of a door, a stamping of feet on the piazza. Lucy gave an exclamation that was half apprehension, half relief. But Ann grew a little paler, and the line of her jaw hardened, as if she braced herself.

The women regarded State Police Sergeant Archer Brett and Dr. Partridge with an anxiety which they did their best to hide, but the two representatives of the law seemed definitely reassuring. The sergeant was a tall, straight man of thirty-five. Dr. Partridge was even more comforting: such an agreeable, everyday sort of man.

Archer introduced himself and the doctor, adding, "I understand you need our help here."

"Yes, we do," Lucy assured him earnestly. "I'm Mrs. Patterson, and this is my cousin, Miss Barbour. What . . . do you want to see the—him—first thing?"

"I think we'd better," Archer said.

He and the doctor both had flashlights, and Ann and Lucy had provided themselves with lanterns. Keeping close together, they crossed a big shed, and went into the barn. It was a huge, draughty place, where their footsteps echoed hollowly, and the weak light from the lanterns flickered in the cold air. The wind whistled up among the great rafters, and the sleet beat against the roof.

As they huddled together, their lights made a pool of brightness on the floor; in it lay the body of a man. Lucy made a motion with her lantern, "There . . . "

Thus were they introduced to Deacon Leonard Grimm, who could no longer acknowledge introductions.

He looked to be fifty-two or -three years old. He lay partly tumbled on one side, and behind him the rear bumper and fender of an automobile supported his half-reclining position. His head hung forward on his breast, his arms were limp at his side; he looked for all the world like a well-dressed scarecrow. But his jacket was open, and the dark stain that had soaked through his shirt could not have come from any stuffing of straw. The instrument of his death lay on the floor beside him—a long-handled, three-tined pitchfork.

"You didn't touch anything?" said the sergeant.

Ann said, "I touched his hand, to see if it was—cold." She was very pale, and so was Lucy; their faces looked ghostly, and they swallowed convulsively.

Dr. Partridge said quickly, "We don't need to keep you here any longer." The women left.

"I guess it's murder," the sergeant said.

"I don't see how it could be suicide," Dr. Partridge agreed. "It's pretty hard to tell how long he's been dead. It's five minutes of twelve now. I'd say, roughly, that he died around half-past nine. Call it between eight and ten, if you want a broad time to check alibis."

Archer nodded. "There's no doubt what killed him?"

"No, it was the pitchfork. The internal bleeding killed him, unless one of those points pierced the heart."

"I'll send for the ambulance," Archer said, "and a couple men, and get the pictures and fingerprints and so on." He regarded the body thoughtfully. "He wasn't a very pleasant-looking customer, was he?"

He wasn't. The clean-shaven face looked unnaturally pallid, with hollow cheeks, a predatory nose, and a full-lipped mouth that was twisted into a dreadful, involuntary grin of pain or astonishment. The partly closed eyes were red-rimmed under jutting black eyebrows.

"I don't suppose any of us 'ud look very prepossessing under the circumstances," the doctor replied.

ARCHER put a call through to Rumford, and gave his brief orders. Then he produced a pad and pencil. "Which of you made the actual discovery?"

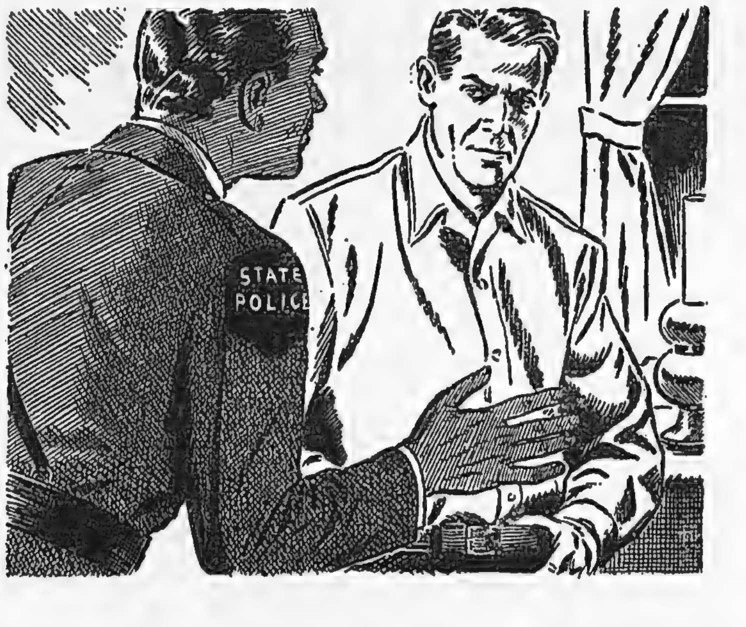
Ann Barbour said, "I did."

"Just tell me about it in your own way."

"I went to Rumford early this afternoon," Ann began, "to buy some things. I hurried to get home early, because I knew Frank—Mr. Patterson—was away, and Lucy doesn't like to stay alone after dark. I drove the car into the barn at about half-past five and came right in here. And there wasn't anybody in the barn then."

Ann was still pale, but not at all confused.

"Then we had supper," she continued, "and after we'd done the dishes we talked; then I read for a while. We decided to go to bed, sometime between half-past nine and ten. Suddenly I happened to wonder whether I'd turned off the switch in the car. Sometimes it stalls when I drive in, and I forget to turn it off. So I took a flashlight and went to see." She stopped and drew a long breath, "I saw a man lying there, all doubled up, partly leaning against the back of the car." She stopped again.



She's not quite as cool as I thought, Archer thought, but she's got good control of herself. Aloud, he said, "Take your time, Miss Barbour."

"When I saw his—his feet, I thought at first it was Luke—he's the hired man—and that he was drunk. Then I saw his black hair, and I knew it couldn't be Luke, for he's bald. Then," she shivered slightly, "I guess I got afraid all at once. I felt as if I might be going to faint, but I didn't. I sat down on a box for a few minutes, until I felt better. Then I ran back here and told Lucy. We went back to see who it was. May I have some water?"

Lucy got a glass from the kitchen.

"Thanks," Ann said. "We saw it was Deacon Grimm, and he was dead. Then we saw the blood," she shivered again, "and the—the pitchfork."

Archer turned to Lucy. "Can you add anything?"

Lucy shook her head. "It's exactly what happened."

The doctor queried: "How did you know he was dead?"

Lucy swallowed. "He—he looked dead. Ann touched his hand, and held her flashlight up to his mouth, but there wasn't any breath showing on the glass. And the blood . . . " Lucy drank what was left of the water.

Archer said, "You say this man is a Deacon Grimm; I take it that you know him?"

Ann nodded; Lucy also nodded, and went on to explain: "Leonard Grimm. He lives—lived almost across the road from us. We've known him for years."

"Was he living all alone?"

"He had a housekeeper, Clarabel Lafond. She lives near. But I don't think she was at the Deacon's this afternoon. She and Gus—that's her husband—always go into Rumford Saturdays, to do their trading."

Archer said, "I'll also have to see your hired man."

"Luke left early this afternoon," Lucy said. "His brother came for him, and I saw them drive off. He couldn't know anything about it."

"Not unless he came back," Archer said drily. "When did Mr. Patterson leave home?"

"About eleven this morning. He and some friends went from Town in a car, but they were going to join a lot of others in Rumford. They'd chartered a bus to go to a convention."

They heard the hum of an approaching vehicle—the ambulance. Archer went out to take charge of operations.

THE telephone rang, and Lucy seized it. "Yes?" She listened. "Well, for heaven's sake! Where do you suppose he is?" She listened further, and finally hung up, looking very disturbed. "That was Ray Summer," she explained. "He and the others have just got to the hotel at Winchester. The storm delayed them. But he says Frank missed the bus at Pinkney, and got left behind. They stopped there at about five to get some lunch; and then they got started again in a hurry, and nobody noticed Frank was missing until they'd gone quite a ways. Then they figured he'd hire a car and drive to Winchester, so they didn't go back. I hope he'll be all right."

The sergeant appeared with two companions, one a trooper, the other in plain clothes. He indicated the former. "Henry Burke's going to stay here with me. Willoughby's going back with the body, and you better go with him, Doctor."

Lucy described her husband's predicament.

The telephone rang, and again Lucy answered it. It became evident, from her half of the ensuing conversation, and from her relieved expression, that the caller was her husband. She told Frank that "something" made it imperative for him to come home at once.

"He's got to the hotel at last," she told them. Archer looked at his watch; it was a quarter of two. "He hired a car in Pinkney," Lucy went on, "but it broke down between there and Winchester, and he had an awful job getting it going. He says he'll get the next train back to Rumford; it gets in at eight in the morning."

Archer than resumed his questions: "Have you any idea why the Deacon was in your barn?"

They hadn't.

"Could he have come over to borrow anything?"

"If he'd wanted anything," Lucy said, "he would have come and asked me about it, not gone out there to help himself. We weren't friendly enough for that."

"You mean, you weren't on friendly terms?"

Lucy hesitated. "N-no, but we—we didn't neighbor much. Besides, the Deacon must have known Frank was away."

Archer, who had never lived in the country, wanted to know how the Deacon would have known.

Ann smiled. She said, "Everybody knows everybody else's business here; you'll soon find that out."

"I see." Archer was thoughtful. "I don't suppose either of you knows of anyone who wanted—er—Deacon Grimm out of the way, who might have done this?"

Lucy started to speak, but thought better of it. Ann smoothed her hair back over her ears. She wore earrings of dull silver.

Finally Ann said, "There are quite a number of people, I believe, who didn't like the Deacon much. But what we could tell you would be only gossip or hearsay. I think we'd rather not name any names—just now."

Archer was annoyed, but he couldn't help smiling at the careful phrasing of that reply. "I won't keep you up any longer. Burke and I will have to be here for a while—we've got a lot to do."

HENRY BURKE woke Archer up at half-past six the next morning. Archer relinquished the sitting room couch to Burke. "Your turn now."

Feet clicked on the stairs, and the door opened to admit Lucy Patterson. "Well," she said, "did you manage to get some sleep?"

"The couch was very comfortable," Archer said. He followed her into the kitchen, where he asked, "What does your cousin Ann do?"

"She writes. Verses and things, and she does book reviews for a Boston paper. She'd like to write real books and poetry, but she doesn't ever seem able to get started."

"Hasn't she any folks?"

Lucy explained that Ann's parents were dead. "After they died, Ann visited us quite a lot, and we always got along first-rate. So now this is really home to her, especially since . . . " Lucy stopped abruptly.

Before Archer could get her started again, Ann had appeared.

The sergeant finished his coffee. "I must get busy now. Your husband will be along soon, Mrs. Patterson; I arranged for Trooper Haley to bring him over. I want to see the Deacon's housekeeper now. I'm going to ask you both, and Mr. Patterson, too, when he comes, to stay around the house today, and not to talk to anyone outside about the case."

Ann was looking out the window, her thoughts apparently miles away. She wore white pearl earrings this morning, Archer noticed, instead of the silver ones. With an effort, she brought herself back into the present, and said, "I'm quite willing to do what you—ask."

"So am I, of course," Lucy said.

The sergeant waked Trooper Burke and gave him some low-voiced instructions. "Stay here until I get back," he finished, "and keep your eyes open. I don't want the girls to put anything over while I'm gone."

"No girl," Henry Burke said indignantly, "can put anything over on me!"

ARCHER walked out to the main road and surveyed the general outlook. Lucy had already described the neighborhood for him, so that he could tell who lived where. Almost opposite the Pattersons' stood Grimm's farm. It looked neat and prosperous. Beyond the barn appeared the upper part of another house, with smoke rising from its chimney. That belonged to a man named Buckley. Almost opposite the Buckleys', Archer could see the chimneys of still another house, sitting back from the road: the old Wayland place, which was empty.

The Lafonds', where he wanted to go next, was in the opposite direction. He set off down the hill.

The house was badly in need of paint and shingles. From within came raucous sounds of music. Archer rapped on the door. Then he rapped again, louder. Soon heavy footsteps approached, and the door opened several inches. In the opening appeared a sullen, unshaven, and very unprepossessing countenance. The bloodshot eyes took in Archer's uniform. "A cop! What's up?"

"I want to see Mrs. Lafond," Archer informed him.

"She ain't up. What do you want to see her for?"

"I'll come in and tell her that," Archer replied. He entered a small, cluttered, dirty room. His host backed across the room to a partially opened door, and stuck his head inside. "Get up, Clarabel."

Archer thought to himself, "If I'm looking for a murderer, here's one made to order!"

The man certainly looked the part. He was heavily built, although short. His greasy black hair and week's growth of black stubble, together with the bloodshot black eyes, and a thick, ugly nose, made him look exactly like most people's idea of a gangster.

"Are you Gus Lafond?" Archer inquired, sitting down.

"Yeh, that's me. You ain't told me yet what you want of Clarabel."

Before the sergeant could reply, the bedroom door opened and he got a surprise. The Deacon's housekeeper was nineteen or twenty, and startlingly pretty, from her bare ankles to her permanently waved, golden-brown hair, which was becomingly tousled. She wore a tight, dark dress, and her eyes were large, blue and heavily mascaraed. "Boy, what a charmer!" Archer thought. "Why isn't she in the movies?" But her voice was coarse and common—a giveaway: "You want to see me?"

"If you please, Mrs. Lafond."

Clarabel seated herself on the table, exposing long and shapely legs. "Well, here I am, Big Boy."

Archer decided that there were very few brains behind that movie-magazine-cover face; very few brains, and even fewer scruples. He said, "When did you see Deacon Grimm last?"

"The Deacon? After supper last night. Why?"

"Suppose you tell me about it."

Clarabel looked at Gus, who said, "I don't see what business it is of his, but we ain't got no secrets."

"Well," Clarabel said, "We got home from Rumford late, so I was late getting up to the Deacon's house. 'Bout seven, I guess. I got his supper and ate with him, and washed the dishes after. Then I came back here."

"What time did you leave the Deacon's house?"

"Oh, I don't know. Around quarter to eight."

"Was he in the house when you left?"

"Sure. He was reading the paper in the kitchen."

"Was that the last you saw of him?"

"Sure it was. I don't go up Sundays. But why—"

Lafond broke in. "Yes, what's the idea, asking Clarabel all them questions? She ain't the Deacon's keeper."

Quite the reverse, Archer was inclined to think. "Deacon Grimm has been murdered," he said baldly, "and I advise you to tell me all you know."

If he had hoped for fireworks, he was disappointed. Gus' pasty face grew a little pastier, and Clarabel dropped the cigarette she was smoking, but that was all.

Mr. Lafond considered. "It's like Clarabel said," he replied at last. "She come back here before eight o'clock, and we listened to the radio a while, and then went to bed."

Damn! Another mutual alibi! Archer said, "Have you any other witnesses to that?"

"Yes, we have," Lafond snapped. "Danny Cheever was here all the time, and can swear we're telling the truth."

"Who's Danny Cheever?"

"My brother," Clarabel said. "He lives with us."

"He ain't here now," Lafond added, "but you can get him easy enough. He works up to Buckleys'."

Archer went across to the wall telephone and turned the crank. "Will you get me the Buckleys' house, please?"

A bell rang several times; then there was a click, and a new voice said, "Hello-o?" It was a woman's voice, and was curiously slow and rich.

"Is this Mrs. Buckley?"

"Ye-es," said the rich voice. "Who—what is it?"

"If Danny Cheever is there, will you have him come to his sister's at once? There's been an accident."

Lafond got angrily to his feet: "Say—"

"Sit down," Archer told him. Then to Mrs. Buckley, "Tell him to hurry, will you?" He hung up, and turned to Lafond. "Don't try any tough guy stuff with me."

Gus mumbled something, but made no further protests.

Finally Danny Cheever stumbled in. "What's—matter?" he gasped. "Mrs. Buckley said—accident!"

Clarabel's brother was about seventeen, and looked like a caricature of Clarabel. He had the same golden-brown hair, an untidy mop of it, and the same large blue eyes stared from his vacant, pink-cheeked face. He was tall and awkward; and it was plain, at first glance, that Danny was not quite "all there." His face twitched, and his hands and feet moved with nervous jerkiness. Archer calmed him down by explaining that the "accident" had happened to Deacon Grimm, and that he merely wanted to ask a few questions. The boy grew less jittery, although he still looked frightened. And his answers only confirmed Gus Lafond's story. Danny had returned from the Buckleys' about half-past six the night before. Clarabel had arrived before a quarter of eight. Yes, Gus and Clarabel had been right there until he went to bed. No, they hadn't gone out at all. No, he hadn't seen the Deacon since early Saturday morning. How was he sure that Gus and Clarabel had been home all night? Why, they said they had! Archer gave up and left, with three more suspects to add to his list.

When Archer got back to the farm, he was introduced to Frank Patterson, Lucy's husband, who turned out to be an ordinary-looking man of about forty. He had a pleasant face, with humor in it, and reddish hair.

The hired man, Luke Prindle, was also on hand. A few words with him convinced Archer that, unless he was the world's finest actor, he knew nothing about Deacon Grimm's death. In fact, he appeared to know very little about anything. As a potential murderer or even a useful witness, he seemed to be a total loss. He had not been alone since he left the farm with his brother on the previous afternoon; he had been in the bosom of his family all the evening and was able and willing to produce seven or eight relatives to bear witness to the fact.

The sergeant's talk with Patterson wasn't wholly satisfactory, either. Frank went over his adventures in detail; but his narrative was entirely uncorroborated, as yet, and much of it would be difficult, if not impossible, to check. If he was telling the truth, he had been seventy-odd miles away when the crime took place, tinkering with the engine of a hireling Chevrolet.

There was time before dinner to visit the Deacon's empty house, so Archer set out again.

When he returned, dinner was ready. The Deacon's house had been a disappointment. In his inspection of it, he had found nothing significant. Clarabel had evidently done a better job of housekeeping there than in her own home, for everything had been orderly and clean. And nowhere were there any indications of the fate that had been in store for Leonard Grimm. It seemed as if he had simply put on his outer garments, that stormy Saturday night, and walked out of the house. Everything looked as if he had expected to return. But he hadn't.

Halfway through dinner, Dr. Partridge called up. He had finished the autopsy. "Grimm died," he said, "as a result of internal hemorrhages caused by the sharp points of the pitchfork. The time of death I gave you was approximately right: around nine-thirty."

"Is that all?" Archer inquired.

"No, there's something else. He was full of dope."

"What?" Archer cried.

"I thought that'd make you sit up," the doctor said. "Yes, Deacon or not, he took cocaine, and was, I should judge, a regular addict over quite a long period. Better find out who was selling the Deacon snow, Archer—our Federal friends will want to know."

Archer rang off, after arranging for a meeting the next day with the doctor, State's Attorney Golding, and Captain Randall, the Rumford commandant, if the latter arrived home from a hunting trip. "I'll hope to have a lead by that time," he said. But to himself he thought, "Hope is the word!"

After dinner Archer sent Henry Burke off on a gossip hunt. "Collect all the dirt you can," he told him. "Get people talking about the Deacon, and find out all you can about him. Learn what you can about the people here, too, and about Lafond and his wife."

Archer then took everybody's prints and set to work comparing them. At the end of an hour he was convinced that the fingerprints were a frost. They all belonged to members of the household, and were in places where no suspicion could attach to them. Archer felt it might be profitable to pay a visit to the Buckleys.

The front door was opened by Mrs. Buckley—as soon as she spoke Archer recognized that rich, voluptuous voice. She must be forty-nine or fifty now; but before her tall figure grew too heavy and her black hair turned iron-gray, she must have been a handsome woman.

She invited him into a modern, well-furnished living room. Her husband would be home before long. What could she do for him? Of course she had heard about poor Leonard—she was the first person who had called the Deacon by his Christian name—but she didn't know anything about what had happened. Archer steered her to a general discussion of Deacon Grimm's relations with his neighbors, and found her ready to talk about them at length, with seeming intelligence and insight.

"Do you think perhaps Miss Barbour had some grudge against Deacon Grimm?"

"Oh no," she said. "I wouldn't say that. But, naturally, she resented what he did in connection with Forrest Martin. Of course, if Forrest had stayed to—"

"Wait a minute! Who's Forrest Martin?"

"Oh!" She seemed surprised. "Hasn't Ann told you about him? Well, he opened the old Wayland place; and he and Ann were—well, everyone expected them to get married. Leonard held a mortgage on the place, and when Forrest couldn't keep up his payments, Leonard foreclosed, naturally. Forrest, who had an insane temper, took it very badly, and made all kinds of threats against Leonard. But when Leonard swore out a warrant for Forrest's arrest, Forrest disappeared."

This was all news to Archer. He would have a few more questions to ask Miss Ann Barbour. He inquired about the Lafonds and Danny Cheever.

"Poor Danny," Rhoda Buckley said. "He doesn't have a very good home life. I wouldn't say a word against Clarabel to him, for he thinks the world of her; but she's not the proper person to look after such a delicate boy. And while I don't like to talk against anyone, I do think that Gus Lafond is a very bad influence. He drinks, and I've even heard that he takes drugs."

Archer let her talk. Mrs. Buckley seemed to have a pretty comprehensive knowledge of all the Highbrook inhabitants and their doings. But she had comparatively little to say about Leonard Grimm himself.

At five o'clock, as Mr. Buckley had not returned, Archer took his departure.

THE sergeant found Ann alone in the Pattersons' sitting room and addressed her bluntly. "Where is Forrest Martin now, Miss Barbour?"

Ann was startled but recovered quickly. "I don't know."

"Why didn't you tell me about *him* when I asked what people might have reasons for hating Deacon Grimm?"

"Because Forrest has been away for more than a year. I didn't see that it had anything to do with him."

"Is it true that you were engaged to marry him?"

Ann looked at him as if he were something malodorous. "You've been listening to Rhoda Buckley. Yes, I was engaged to Forrest. I still am." She was quite calm.

"If I could only make her mad," the sergeant thought, "I might learn something." He said, "You're engaged to a man, but you don't know where he is?"

"I don't."

"Have you seen him since he left Highbrook?"

"I don't consider it's any of your business."

"I have to ask these questions, Miss Barbour."

Ann lighted a cigarette. "What did Rhoda tell you?"

Archer gave her an abridged résumé of Mrs. Buckley's remarks about Forrest Martin. "Is that the truth?"

"It's a malicious distortion of the truth," Ann declared angrily. "Forrest hasn't got an insane temper. Any threats he may have made against the Deacon were only to protect his own interests. The Deacon deliberately broke an agreement they had, and Forrest didn't have the money or the influence to fight him. I don't know where Forrest is, but he didn't have anything to do with the Deacon's death, I know that!"

"I wish you'd be more frank with me, Miss Barbour."

"That's all I *can* tell you. If you want to believe what Rhoda Buckley says, go ahead and believe it. She hates me, and she'll probably tell you all kinds of things."

Archer said, "She showed a much more reasonable attitude than you've done, Miss Barbour."

Ann said frigidly, "No doubt. At least I don't go throwing hints and accusations around, the way she does. If I did, I'd say that she's as capable of killing the Deacon as anybody. But I'm not going to say another word."

Suddenly she said, "I'm sorry. I'm tired, and it's been pretty upsetting. And it makes me mad to have people talk that way about Forrest, when he can't defend himself . . . " She sighed, "But, honestly, I can't tell you anything more about him. Please believe me."

Lucy, unlike Ann, was willing enough to talk; but, like her cousin, had nothing that was new to impart. For all her frank manner, Archer thought that she was keeping something back, too. Yes, she knew that Ann and Forrest had been engaged, but was quite sure Ann didn't know Forrest's present whereabouts.

Archer asked more questions, but Lucy was tactfully unhelpful. She didn't think much of Gus Lafond, and considered Clarabel a morally irresponsible moron. Mrs. Buckley she had always liked, and Mr. Buckley was a harmless old thing who wouldn't hurt a fly. Archer became immediately suspicious of Buckley. These harmless old things who wouldn't hurt flies sometimes went haywire and did unbelievable things. But the person he was most interested in was the missing Forrest Martin.

He asked, without much hope, "Did your husband ever have any unpleasantness with the Deacon?"

Lucy hesitated, then said, "They didn't agree about politics. Frank's going to run for Selectman next spring, and the Deacon wanted a friend of his to have it."

"They never had any other trouble?"

"No," Lucy replied, but her tone lacked conviction.

Frank gave his opinions freely, but didn't seem concerned whether the sergeant believed him or not. The Lafonds Frank considered not very desirable citizens. "Clarabel's a damned pretty little bitch," he declared, "but she's a bad actor. I guess Gus is a kind of a bad egg, too, but he seems to mind his own business, though God only knows what it is!"

Mr. Patterson credited Warner Buckley with greater capabilities than Lucy had done. "He's a queer old duck," Frank said, "but not half such a fool as he looks." Asked about Mrs. Buckley, he replied that he guessed she was all right, although inclined to want to run other people's affairs.

"She married Buckley for his money—he's got a lot—and he's twenty years older than she is. But I think sometimes that maybe it doesn't do her quite as much good as she expected. Still, she ought to be satisfied. If Buckley wasn't quite so old and dried-up, I guess she'd think that she was pretty well fixed, as she damn well is."

Archer said casually, "I understand you and the Deacon didn't see eye to eye about local politics."

"Had a few arguments. Nothing serious."

"It's funny," Archer said, "that Grimm came over here that night, when he must have known you were away."

Frank sat forward in his chair. "What do you mean?"

"Well, your wife says everybody knew you were going to be away this week-end, so the Deacon must have known it. He evidently had some reason for coming over here that wasn't connected with you."

To his astonishment, this innocent-sounding remark had an unexpected effect. Frank glared. "What are you trying to get at, Brett? If you think he came to see my wife, you've got another think coming! She's not that kind."

"I had no idea of reflecting on her in any way." Archer looked at Frank steadily. "What makes you think I did?"

Frank cooled down as rapidly as he had flared up. "All right, of course you didn't. My fault for being a fool. But the Deacon was always running after women, and I've an idea he'd bothered Lucy once or twice when I was away. When you said that, I thought you meant . . . "

"Well, I didn't," Archer told him. But to himself, he thought, "If he gets mad so easy with no reason at all, what would he do, given provocation?"

HENRY BURKE came back. Deacon Grimm's death had made a sensation, he reported. It had leaked out and was the universal topic of conversation among the townspeople. But Burke waited until the Patterson household had gone to bed before going into details.

Archer sat down at a desk. "Did you get any dirt?"

Burke relaxed in an armchair. "There's so damn much," he said, "I don't know where to start. Well, in the first place, there don't seem to be anybody that the Deacon was on real good terms with. Did you know he and Patterson had a heck of a row about a month ago?"

"No, where was that?" Archer asked.

"Down at the store in the Village. Seems Patterson wants to run for Selectman, but the Deacon had a crony he wanted to have the job. He told Patterson to lay off, or he'd see he got defeated. Patterson went up in the air and said he'd be Selectman or know the reason why. They didn't come to blows quite, but pretty near. Anyway, the Deacon said he'd show Patterson it didn't pay to oppose *him*. Patterson raises apples, and he was all set to sell a lot of them to the buyer for the State. But the Deacon pulled strings so that Patterson lost the contract. He was plenty mad and named a few things he'd like to see happen to the Deacon.

"Then Grimm had a feud with the Buckleys. Their trouble started over a boundary line. Last spring the Deacon built a pig pen on what *he* said was the line, and it was right close up to the Buckleys' sun parlor. Old man Buckley was hopping mad and went to law about it, but nothing's settled yet. Then there's the Lafond crowd: the man was a bootlegger, back in Prohibition. Nobody seems to know what he does now, but he always has cash enough. The girl is a—well, I wouldn't necessarily believe what the women said about her, but most of the men agreed it was right. Grimm didn't hire her just for her housekeeping services, that's sure!"

"What about the boy, Danny Cheever?"

"A few people tried to make out he was dangerous and ought to be shut up; but most of 'em thought he was a good boy, even if he isn't quite right in his upper story. But hardly anybody thought he killed the Deacon."

"Learn anything new about the people here?"

"I guess the Barbour girl never had much to do with the Deacon; she's pretty standoffish. But she may have had it in for him indirectly. A fellow by the name of Martin—"

"I heard all that," Archer said, and related what Rhoda Buckley had told him, with Ann's subsequent corrections. Henry said that a majority of the townspeople considered Forrest Martin the most logical candidate for the role of killer; he was known to have threatened the Deacon in the past. "Then," Henry said, "the Barbour girl may have had it in for the Deacon on her own account. He was in the habit of making passes at all the women who are young or good-looking, and she acts like the sort that wouldn't stand for that kind of thing."

"Was there anything about Mrs. Patterson?"

"N—no. Somebody said she was pretty sore when the Deacon did her husband out of that contract . . . "

(So Lucy had known about that!)

Archer then told about his conversations with the Pattersons, Ann, and Mrs. Buckley.

Burke said, "So you think the girls are lying?"

"They may be telling the truth, but I'm darned sure it isn't the whole truth. They know (or think they know) something they aren't telling."

"D'you think Patterson's telling the truth?"

Archer shrugged.

"I would have said so, but now . . . I'll try to have his story checked."

"Could he have got back here any way, while he says he was stranded between Pinkney and Winchester?"

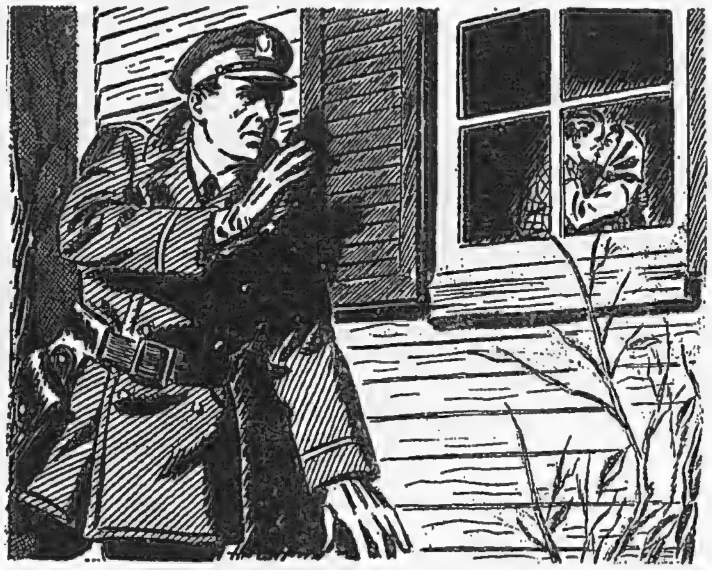
Archer said, "We'll have to go over that. It doesn't sound very probable, but . . . " The sergeant was thinking of how Frank had flared up at the unintentional implication that the Deacon had been to see his wife.

SOON after dinner, Monday, Archer returned from Rumford with Captain Randall and the State's Attorney. The Captain was a small, chipper, sparrow-like man. Mr. Felix Golding looked what he was—a third-rate lawyer who had been jockeyed into public office through politics and pull.

It was Lucy and Ann who bore the brunt of the inquisition. But they stood it well, and were able to avoid most of the pitfalls spread before them. By half-past three Captain Randall decided that he had heard enough from them, for the present, and that the Lafonds deserved his attention. But, before leaving, the whole party made a farewell tour of the farm buildings, and inspected again the spot where the body had been found.

That evening, after the others had gone to bed, Archer studied his notes for awhile, reflecting with unworthy satisfaction that the Captain and Golding had not learned anything more than he had already found out for himself. The sergeant blew out the light and went upstairs and to sleep.

Archer Brett was a light sleeper. So, when he woke suddenly, he knew there must have been some sound.



He listened intently, but heard only the drumming of rain on the tin roof. It was twelve minutes past three.

He slid out of bed, pulled on his raincoat, thrust his feet into slippers, and grabbed his flashlight. He opened the door; all seemed quiet. He went softly down the stairs and into the kitchen; all dark and still. He switched on his light. The door leading to the shed, while still locked, was now bolted. So what?

It certainly looked as if somebody had gone out. Should he try to follow? No chance of telling what direction they had taken, now. Better to wait for the wanderer's return. He sat down, turned off his light. He dozed, knowing he would wake at the first sound. . . .

There it was—the click of a key in the lock, the careful opening of a door.

Archer put his finger on his light switch. The door closed very softly. Now!

He pressed the switch. In the glaring circle of light Ann Barbour stood. She wore a dark, fur-trimmed coat; beneath it a foot of pale pink night-gown showed.

"Miss Barbour, you know nobody is supposed to go out at night without having permission. Where have you been?"

"Really, Sergeant Brett," Ann replied in a freezing tone, "it is sometimes necessary to go out—er—out back, without asking the permission of anyone, even the police!" She swept by him, and he heard her going upstairs.

He looked at his watch—twenty-four minutes since he had first waked up. Then he suddenly remembered that when Ann had stood in the light, he had noticed sparkling drops of moisture on her hair, and on the black fur of her coat. It was raining out. But, to reach the place which Ann had modestly designated as "out back," it was not necessary to go out-of-doors. "Out back" opened off the shed, and while glacially cold, was quite dry.

"She's clever," Archer thought admiringly. "That was quick thinking!" He went into the shed and turned his light on the floor. Yes, there were faint, damp smudges easily visible. She had been outside, somewhere, and had come in through the barn.

Archer relocked the door and went back to bed.

THE inquest was held at eight o'clock on Tuesday morning, at the State Police headquarters in Rumford. It was purely a formality. Clarabel Lafond identified the body, and told of her last visit to the Deacon's house. Then Ann Barbour told her story of finding the body, and Lucy Patterson corroborated it.

Dr. Partridge's evidence was short and highly technical (he made no reference to his discovery that Deacon Grimm was a cocaine addict); and Archer's was even shorter, being confined to a mere statement of his routine activities at Highbrook.

The jurors brought in an open verdict of murder: Deacon Grimm, they opined, had been willfully murdered, by a person or persons unknown.

Late in the afternoon Archer remembered that he hadn't yet interviewed Mr. Warner Buckley.

He found the Buckleys at home. Rhoda wore a dress of orchid, trimmed with black. She looked quite striking. Warner Buckley looked striking, too, but in a different way. He was tall and thin and stooping, with a long, bony face and prominent teeth, like an elderly horse. He was bald, except for a modest fringe in back, and had a close-cut, bristling moustache. But it was his peculiar mincing manner and voice that made him seem such a queer fish. Archer was ready to believe that Rhoda had married him for his money, as gossip said.

Mrs. Buckley introduced Archer to her husband. Both she and Mr. Buckley seemed perfectly willing to explain how they had spent their time between eight and ten o'clock on the previous Saturday night. "Although," Rhoda said, "I'm afraid our alibis are rather—what do you call it?—unconfirmed. You'll just have to take our word for them."

Buckley had gone to the Village early Saturday afternoon, had met a friend and gone with him to a football game, not returning until late. "I got tired of waiting for him," Rhoda continued, "so I went to bed early, about half-past eight. I sleep very soundly, so I didn't hear him come in, but he says his friend brought him back about an hour after that."

"Ah—yes," Buckley agreed. "I saw Mrs. Buckley had—ah—retired, so I went up quietly, in order not to disturb her. Mrs. Buckley and I occupy—ah—separate bedrooms."

"So they really have no alibis at all," Archer thought to himself. He said, "Did either of you go out again that night?"

Oh no, certainly not. Why should they?

The sergeant could think of several reasons, but didn't mention them. Instead, he asked when they remembered seeing Deacon Grimm last. Saturday morning, Mrs. Buckley said, they had seen him around his place as usual. Had they spoken with him? Oh no. Mr. Buckley explained, "He was not on friendly terms with us. We were not in the habit of exchanging those little—ah—pleasantries which often make life in the country so delightful. After the way he had—ah—treated us. . . . "

Mrs. Buckley gave a sudden start. She had just remembered that Danny Cheever had mentioned that something was wrong with one of the pedigreed Leghorns. Buckley immediately went out. As soon as he had left the room, Rhoda sat down beside Archer on the davenport.

"I didn't want to say anything before Mr. Buckley," she said, "for he would accuse me of gossiping. But I want to suggest that you ask Ann Barbour what she was doing yesterday morning, down at the old Wayland place. I saw her go in there. I thought you ought to know about it, in case you didn't."

"That's very interesting. I'll look into it."

Rhoda moved a little nearer to him on the davenport. She used "Night in Vienna," not too sparingly. Archer suddenly wondered if she had ever been an actress. Her manner, as well as her voice, suggested the stage.

She went on talking about the Deacon's death, and how deeply she felt it. They had had their differences, but after all, he had been a neighbor, and a fine man, in many ways. She was glad that the investigation into his death was in such good hands. The soothing cadences of her voice rose and fell. She shifted to her husband—a wonderful man, but his interests were so far removed from hers. . . . She moved closer to the sergeant. The odor of "Night in Vienna" grew stronger. Archer came to, abruptly. He thought to himself. "Good Lord! Is she going to tell me her husband doesn't understand her? What'll I do then?" But he was saved from taking any immediate action by the audible closing of the back door. Rhoda instantly resumed her seat on the other side of the room.

Buckley came in and lowered his length into an armchair. "Perhaps you've discovered by this time that Grimm was not an—ah—easy man to get along with? He was a hard man, and vindictive, too. His private character was—ah—deplorable."

Archer encouraged him to talk, and was rewarded by hearing the complete history of the disputed boundary line and the disgraceful pig pen. Buckley got quite excited, so much so that Archer caught Mrs. Buckley looking at him with a slightly anxious expression.

She went with Archer to the front door.

"You mustn't take what Warner says about Leonard too seriously," she said in a low voice. "He's very—excitable. Leonard did annoy us sometimes, but we didn't hold any grudge against him, really. When any one does something they shouldn't, I always try to see their point of view. I always say to myself, 'There, but for the Grace of God, go I.' And when you realize that, you can't *hate* anyone, can you?" Which Archer thought a remark worthy of some study. But he only said "Good Night" politely and tore himself away.

WHEN Archer got back to the Pattersons' everyone had gone to bed. He wondered whether Ann was contemplating another trip tonight. He would have to keep watch. He went up to his room, but kept his clothes on, and lay down on his bed. He would be sure to wake up when anyone went down stairs . . .

There it was, a door closing ever so gently. Archer scrambled into his coat, seized his flashlight, went silently into the hall and down the stairs. He let himself out the front door. He crouched down on the porch, behind a dwarf evergreen.

Presently he saw a dim shape coming from the direction of the barn. As the shadow drew abreast of the porch, he made out the uncertain outline of somebody carrying something—several somethings. Ann? But what was she carrying? She walked up the road, toward the Village. Was she running away? Those bundles looked suspicious. Archer followed. She went on past the Buckleys' house, and disappeared behind a clump of lilacs on the other side of the road, as if heading for the Wayland place. So Rhoda had been telling the truth!

By the time Archer reached the lilacs, Ann was going around toward the back of the house, and he made his way cautiously after her. He crept around a corner of the building toward a kind of ell at the back. Then he saw a pale flicker of light that showed through a window of the ell. Toward this he felt his way. The windows at the back of the house were not boarded, and one of them had an ill-fitting curtain. Archer found that, by craning his neck, he could see inside.

The light he had seen came from a lantern that was sitting on the floor, casting erratic shadows around the dismantled room. Near it stood a small oil stove and several cartons of canned goods. On an upended box Ann Barbour sat; and, beside her, sitting cross-legged on the floor, was a big, broad-shouldered man, wearing lumberman's boots and a heavy mackinaw. He had strong, rather battered features, a firm mouth and stubborn jaw, and was in considerable need of a shave.

Archer puckered his lips in a soundless whistle. Well, well. He wouldn't have to search any farther for the missing Forrest Martin, apparently. The man took a sandwich from the basket Ann had brought. Beside it, Archer now identified the other object she had been carrying: a milk can.

To his disappointment, the sergeant was unable to hear what was being said.

Presently Ann rose to go, and the big man gathered her in his arms, and they stood so for a long time. Nor did her companion's need of a shave seem to trouble Miss Barbour; it was plain she was not being embraced against her will. The sergeant looked away, embarrassed. He moved away from the house and slid behind a tree, as the door opened and the two figures emerged. He could catch an occasional word, now, and heard Ann say something about "come again tomorrow night." That seemed to mean that Martin wasn't planning any immediate departure. Should he tackle him now, or wait? The two on the step were in each other's arms again, and he heard an incautious "Darling. . . ." Finally Ann walked quickly away into the darkness, while Forrest Martin went back into the house. Archer waited until Ann had had plenty of time to get well away from the vicinity. Then he went up to the door and knocked.

THE door opened a crack. "For God's sake, Ann . . ." Archer introduced his foot into the aperture at the bottom. "Sorry, but it isn't Miss Barbour. This is Sergeant Brett, and I'd like to talk with you, Martin." He trained his flashlight on the door, and gripped his pistol with his right hand. Forrest Martin said:

"Well, come along in if you want to."

"I'm armed," Archer warned. He stepped inside the door and closed it, just as Martin's flashlight flared into his eyes. They stood there, staring at each other. Archer half expected a bullet to follow the beam of the other's light, and he kept his pistol ready. But the possible murderer merely set his flashlight down on a box, and said conversationally, "Sit down."

Archer found a packing-case, and sat down on it.

Forrest Martin lowered his two hundred pounds onto another packing-case. "Well," he said, "I suppose you heard Ann go out, and followed her down here; I'm sure she didn't give me away intentionally. What do you want to do? Arrest me for killing the Deacon?"

Archer kept his gun ready. "Well, did you kill him?"

"I wasn't even around here when he was killed."

"Where were you?"

Forrest considered. "If he was killed around half-past nine Saturday night, as Ann says, I must have been somewhere between Litchfield and Freyburg, hoofing it along the road, and wishing somebody would give me a lift. But no car came along until I was pretty near into Freyburg. Then a fellow took me as far as Foxboro. I walked down from there and got here—well, late Sunday night or early Monday morning. Just in time for the excitement, but too late to have been the cause of it."

Archer said, "Can you prove all that?"

The other shrugged. "I might. The fellow that took me in had a New York car. He was a salesman; but I don't know his name or who he worked for, or where he was going. Or where he was from, even. He was a medium-sized fellow with glasses. And he was a Republican, by his talk."

Archer was afraid the description wasn't uncommon enough to be much help. He said, "I ought to arrest you. You had reasons for hating the Deacon, you can't prove an alibi for the time he was killed, and then you're found lurking near the scene of the crime, secretly."

"I'm not lurking," Forrest protested. "This is still my house, as Grimm would have found out if he'd lived until I scraped up cash enough to hire a lawyer to prove it to him. When I heard what had happened, I didn't try to run away. I thought of coming and telling you the whole story, but I figured you wouldn't believe it—no cop would. And Ann was afraid you'd arrest me."

"How did Miss Barbour find out you were here?"

"That was a piece of luck. Early Monday morning, Luke, the Patterson's hired man, came by here. He told me about the murder, so I thought I'd better keep under cover. I told him to tell Ann I was here, and she came down later in the morning. She brought me some milk and grub tonight, and last night, too."

"It's a damn funny coincidence that you happened to get here just after the Deacon was killed."

Forrest shrugged. "Maybe. I was planning to come back here as soon as I got some money together, anyway. And it was so late when I got here Sunday night I couldn't go to Pattersons' then. I know it sounds a damn thin story. That's why I didn't tell it before. If I was the murderer," he added, "I'd just knock you over the head and beat it, tonight. But I haven't done it, or even tried to—that ought to count in my favor."

"I've got a gun," Archer reminded him, drily.

Forrest seemed to think that the gun wouldn't have deterred a really desperate criminal. And the sergeant was inclined to believe him when he said, "If I'd been going to kill Grimm I'd have done it a year ago. If I didn't kill him then, I sure wouldn't now, when I've earned a little cash to fight him legally."

Archer said, "I'm not going to arrest you—now. But come along to Pattersons' with me. Have I got your promise you won't try to leave?"

"I give you my word," Forrest returned.

ARCHER'S vague fear that he might be doing something risky by bringing Martin to the Pattersons' faded away when Wednesday morning came and found the household intact. Lucy and Frank seemed genuinely glad to see Forrest, and Ann couldn't conceal her delight at his appearance. In fact, she didn't try to.

After breakfast Archer drove to the Lafond house.

The unattractive Gus was not at home, but the attractive Clarabel was. She greeted him with the professional smile which she kept on tap for all males. "Gus is gone and won't get back till late tonight," she said, regarding the well-set-up sergeant with approval. Archer wondered if he would learn anything useful by playing up to her; at any rate, he followed her leads. If she wanted to think he had come to see her for personal reasons—well, that was all right, if it led to information. So when he thought a sufficient degree of friendliness had been established, he tried a few questions.

But at the first cautious reference to Deacon Grimm, Clarabel grew instantly silent. Archer wished he had come prepared with a little liquid refreshment; he was willing to bet that a pint of whisky, judiciously applied, would loosen her tongue.

He rose. "I wanted to see your husband," he said, "but if he isn't coming home until late . . . ?"

"He won't be home till midnight," Clarabel said, "so I'll be all alone this evening."

She gave him a look full of meaning, Archer returned the look with what he hoped was a convincing leer, and left.

At the Rumford headquarters, Henry Burke announced that he had finished two of his jobs.

"Good," Archer said. "Tell me about it."

Burke had checked Frank's presence in Pinkney Saturday afternoon, and had verified the fact that he had missed the bus. "I got hold of the garage man who rented him a car, and that was all right, too. He said Patterson asked for a car to drive to Winchester. The garage man let him have a second-hand Chevvie, and he drove off about half-past five."

"Did he drive toward Winchester?"

"The man couldn't tell. Then the hotel people at Winchester checked the fact that Patterson got there about a quarter of two. But I can't find anybody who saw him between the time he left Pinkney and the time he got to Winchester.

"Look here." Henry spread a map on the desk. "It's thirty-eight miles from Pinkney to Winchester, and Patterson claims he broke down about fifteen miles south of Pinkney, and it took him till 'most two o'clock to get to Winchester. But you can see that there are back roads that will take you from Pinkney to Highbrook, and the whole distance is less than fifty miles. If Patterson left Pinkney at five-thirty, he'd have time enough to drive back home, kill the Deacon anywhere from eight to nine-thirty, and then get back to Winchester and make it look as if he had an alibi."

"Seems to me," Archer said, "that you're trying pretty hard to get Mrs. Patterson's husband out of the way. What are you planning to do, marry his widow?"

Henry protested, "I'm just trying to show that we can't let Patterson out yet."

"No," Archer admitted. "He'll have to stay on the list. What did you find out about our friend Gus?"

"Arrested for bootlegging, back before repeal."

Archer was disappointed. "Nothing that connected him with a dope racket?"

Henry shook his head. "Not especially. But one fellow said that some of Gus's friends handled dope."

"So it's still possible Gus was the one who supplied Grimm with his dope. I guess we'll have to ask the F.B.I. boys to help with that. But even if Gus was selling the Deacon dope it wouldn't give him a motive for killing; he wouldn't be likely to knock off a customer."

"No, unless the Deacon thought he was paying too much, and kicked. Maybe Gus was blackmailing him."

"Well, in that case," Archer argued, "it would be the Deacon who'd kill Gus, not vice versa."

"Hell, so it would." Henry was disgusted. "Well, *I* don't know. Maybe the Deacon tried to kill Gus, and Gus got hold of the pitchfork and killed him instead."

"Even that isn't impossible," Archer agreed gloomily.

Then he outlined his plan for the evening's call on Clarabel. Henry stared at him.

"Gosh, Sergeant," he said, "why don't you let me take on that assignment? I haven't had a chance to see her yet. But if what the town folks said was true—!"

Archer said, "No, Henry, I've got to tackle the fair Clarabel myself."

Then the trooper left for lunch. "Bring me back something potent," Archer called after him.

The telephone rang, and Archer heard Rhoda Buckley's voice. Would he stop in and see her as soon as he could? "I have some important news for you," she said. Archer promised to see her that afternoon.

"I didn't find out an awful lot more," Henry said, when he and Archer were en route. "I tried to get more details about the trouble the Deacon had with Martin; but there wasn't anything official, because Martin was never actually arrested."

"What about the Buckleys?" Archer asked.

"The old man was born in Rumford, but went to Boston years ago and made his money there. Then, when he retired, he took up hens as a hobby, and fixed up the place over to Highbrook. A lot of people think he's a little off, but one man I talked with said he's smart enough when he wants to be. He said the biggest fool thing Buckley ever did was to marry Mrs. B."

"How long have they been married?"

"Seven years," Henry said. "Her name was Rhoda Temple, and she's around forty-seven. She's what one woman called 'active' in Rumford society. But nobody knew anything about her private life, or where she comes from."

Archer stopped his car at the Buckleys' gate and got out, and Henry Burke drove away. Rhoda Buckley ushered the sergeant into her living room. He avoided the davenport, and chose a chair some distance from it.

Rhoda sat down. "I see you've found Forrest Martin. I suppose you had to wait for a warrant before arresting him? There's no doubt in my mind but what he killed Leonard; but I realize that you may not have much evidence against him. That is where I hope I can really help."

Archer said that he was ready and waiting to be helped.

"I told you," Rhoda resumed, "that Mr. Buckley was away on Saturday night, and that I went to bed early. That was correct, but there was something I didn't tell you. Before I went to bed, a little before nine, I stopped in the upper hall and looked out the window there, to see how the weather was. I saw a figure come out from among the trees by the Wayland house and go along the road in the direction of the Pattersons'. Of course, it was dark, and I couldn't see the man's face; but from the height and build of the figure, and the way he walked, I'm sure it was Forrest Martin."

"That's very interesting," Archer said.

"I feel sorry when I realize that my evidence may help bring about the imprisonment or death of any human being, even a murderer. But then I think of poor Leonard, killed so brutally, and I know that Forrest should be put where he will cease to be a danger to anyone."

The sergeant had to admit to himself that if she were telling the truth, it looked bad for Forrest. "Well," he said, rising, "I'm much obliged for your help. Every bit of evidence helps."

Then, he walked slowly back to the Pattersons', feeling that he needed a substantial meal to bolster up his morale for the evening session with Clarabel. It was not an event that he was looking forward to with any great amount of pleasure.

AT half-past ten that night, as Archer descended the steps of the Lafond house, he felt that his unpleasant anticipations had been well founded. He had not learned a thing that was likely to be useful in solving the murder of Leonard Grimm. He had not been clever enough to find out what Clarabel knew about the case (if she knew anything). It was his hard luck that she had turned out to be one of those people in whom alcohol does not induce a desire to talk freely.

When the sergeant prepared to take his departure, Clarabel went with him to the car. She was not unsteady on her feet or confused in her speech, but the alcohol had made her excited and vaguely boastful. As she stood beside the car, with one foot on the running board, she seemed to be struggling between a desire to show off and a subconscious fear of saying too much. But her caution weakened; she said, suddenly, "I could tell you a lot of things if I wanted to. They thought I didn't know, but I did. I ain't a fool."

"I haven't any doubt you know a lot. About the Deacon?"

"Him and other people," Clarabel said. She changed the subject. "A thousand dollars," she said dreamily. "If I had that much money I'd get away from this lousy town. I'd get away from Gus and the other men around here, and I'd go to New York, or Hollywood!" The roseate vision held her spellbound.

Then she came abruptly down to earth. "Did you know Deacon Grimm took dope?" she demanded. "He did, and I know where he got it, too."

Archer held his breath, and said, "Yes?"

But alcohol plays mean tricks. Clarabel turned suddenly sulky. "There ain't any reason I should tell you about it. You're a cop, find it out for yourself. But I know something better than that . . ." she paused.

Archer said, with careful indifference, "My dear girl, I don't give a damn whether you tell me anything or not. If you want to, go ahead. If you don't, don't. Only make up your mind, I've got to be going." (If that doesn't do it, he thought, nothing will!)

But it didn't. Clarabel said, "It can wait. There ain't no hurry about it. Maybe you'll come and see me again before long, and we can get better acquainted?" She looked at him invitingly.

But before he could reply, she shook her head. "No, I'll wait. I can tell you later, if I feel like it."

ARCHER had just finished writing his usual report, Thursday afternoon, when he heard a car stop in the yard. Then came steps on the piazza and impatient knocking. Lucy opened the door, and Archer groaned as he heard the newcomer's voice. He knew those oily tones all too well; they belonged to State's Attorney Felix Golding.

"I want a few words with you, Brett," the State's Attorney said smoothly. He closed the sitting room door behind him. "Is it true you've found Forrest Martin?"

"Yes," Archer replied.

"Then why haven't you arrested him?"

"Because I'm not sure he's guilty."

Golding raised his eyebrows. "Oh. And since when have you been an expert at judging guilt or innocence? That's usually left to the jury. Isn't there more evidence against him than against anybody else?"

Archer was silent. Golding went on, "I'm not satisfied with the way you've handled this affair from the start. When I found out that you'd actually got your hands on Martin, but didn't arrest him, I thought it was time I took a hand. There's a good case against him—motive, opportunity, everything. And if you won't arrest him, I can get Sergeant Killick to do so."

Archer said, "There's no more reason to arrest Martin, right now, than some of the others. I refuse to do it. So call in Killick if you want to!"

The State's Attorney's smug face reddened angrily, but before he could reply the door opened and Ann Barbour came in. Her face was pale, but determined. She said, "Thank you, Sergeant Brett, for having the courage of your convictions." Then she addressed Golding: "I overheard what you just said. Under the circumstances, there's only one thing for me to do." She turned to Archer. "Will you ask the others to come in here?"

Presently Patterson, Forrest Martin, Trooper Burke, and Lucy followed Archer into the sitting room.

"Please sit down. I've got something to tell you."

They complied, perplexed and apprehensive.

Ann stood facing them, her back to the mantel. "I've decided it's time to tell the whole truth. I ought to have done it before; but anyway—"

Forrest said, "Don't you think it would be better to keep still, Ann?"

The sergeant stopped him. "Let Miss Barbour tell her story, Martin. Go ahead, Miss Barbour."

Ann went ahead. She said, "What I told you before, Sergeant, was all true. But I left out—some things. When I went out to the barn Saturday night I knew Deacon Grimm would be there. I met him in town that afternoon, just by chance, and he said he had something important to talk to me about, alone. He asked me to meet him in the barn at quarter to ten that night, and said that if I didn't do it, I'd be sorry. So that night I made the excuse about the car switch, and went out to the barn. He was there. He told me he'd found out that Forrest was on his way back here. He said he was going to have him arrested, on that old assault charge, and sent to jail; or else put in the Hospital for the Insane. Either way, he said, he had influence enough to keep Forrest in plenty of trouble. And he'd do it, too, unless I was willing to buy him off. He—he didn't mean with money. If I would—do what he wanted—he said he'd have any charges against Forrest dropped for good. He promised all sorts of things if I'd—if I—" her voice wavered with rage. Archer, glancing at Forrest, saw the big man's hands were clenched. The faces of the others expressed amazement.

Ann continued, "I refused, of course. Then I started to walk away. He sprang forward and grabbed me, and—well, I managed to get away from him. He looked just crazy, and his eyes were queer and glittered like an animal's. And all the time he was talking, horrible talk. I jumped back, to run through the passage, but he was right after me. There was a pitchfork leaning against the wall, and I grabbed it instinctively. I held it in both hands in front of me, with the tines pointing out and up. I thought he'd stop when he saw it. But he didn't, he kept right on coming. And all of a sudden he pitched forward, right onto the tines of the fork, and wrenched it out of my hands, and fell against the car. He must have stumbled, or caught his foot on something. Anyway, he slumped down in a heap. I was stunned, but I must have had some idea that I ought to pull out the pitchfork. So I did." She shivered. "But I saw he was dead. I wiped off the handle of the pitchfork and left it lying there, beside him. Then I went back to the house, and everything else was just as I told you before." She walked carefully to the nearest chair and sank into it, exhausted.

Lucy gasped, "Ann, I don't believe you!"

Forrest had taken both Ann's hands in his. He said, "You don't expect us to believe that story, do you?"

She gave a half-hysterical laugh. "Why else do you think I told it?"

ARCHER had a very good idea as to why she had told it, but he said nothing. The State's Attorney had seen fit to butt in on the case, let him handle it.

Then Golding said venomously, "It was a very pretty story, and Miss—er—Barbour told it very convincingly." He sneered. "But it came a little too pat after she'd heard me tell Brett I was going to arrest Martin for killing Grimm." He looked at Ann. "All you've succeeded in doing, Miss Barbour, is to make me more certain that your boy friend killed Grimm, and that you suspect him."

"But I did it! I . . . " Ann said.

Forrest put a large hand gently over her mouth. "That's enough, Ann." He turned to Archer. "Sergeant, arrest me for the murder of Deacon Grimm."

Archer stared at him. "But you said . . . "

"Yes, I thought I could get away with that story of not getting here until Sunday night, but I may as well give you the truth, since our brilliant legal light, here, has already got the goods on me. No, I got here Saturday night, around nine. I was walking along the road toward Pattersons' when I met the Deacon. I had a few things to say to him that I'd been keeping for over a year. We were right outside Pattersons' barn, and the door was ajar, so we stepped inside, out of the storm, to talk. We got arguing, and he made me mad, so—"

Ann broke in desperately, "That isn't true! He—"

"Shshsh!" Forrest said. "You've told your story, now it's my turn. Anyway, that's about all. Everybody in town'll tell you I've got a hell of a temper; I guess I had a brainstorm. I remember seeing the pitchfork, and I must have picked it up without noticing. Then everything went blank, and when I came to, there was Grimm lying there, dead. I went out through the woodshed, and got to my place without anybody seeing me, I thought. That's the story, so you might as well arrest me."

Golding said impatiently, "Will you arrest this man now, Brett? What in hell are you waiting for?"

"All right," Archer said reluctantly. He was far from convinced, but it appeared he had no choice.

"Trooper, take this man out to the car," Golding ordered. "Better put handcuffs on him. Lucky I happened to come out this afternoon, wasn't it?"

Archer said nothing.

ARCHER hadn't finished dressing the next morning when someone pounded excitedly on his door. "Sergeant Brett!" It was Lucy. "Can you come down right away?"

The sergeant hustled into the rest of his clothes and complied. In the kitchen he found Lucy, Frank, and Ann standing around Danny Cheever, Clarabel's brother, who was slumped, white-faced, on a chair. Frank said, "Danny's seen or heard something wrong somewhere, but we can't find out what. He came running in here, gabbling something about 'policeman' and 'doctor'." Archer sent Frank after a glass of whiskey. He gave a few sips to Danny, who got a little color back and tried to speak, but without much success. Finally the boy got up and ran to the door. The sergeant hurried after him. Frank followed suit.

The two men followed Danny to the Grimm place, and around one side of the house. It had a high piazza in back, ten or twelve feet above the ground, which was reached by a long flight of steep steps.

Crumpled in a heap at the foot of these steps lay Clarabel Lafond. Her bright, waved hair glinted in the sunlight, and moved when the wind stirred it. But Clarabel would not move again. She was quite dead.

Danny sank to the ground beside her, dazedly repeating his sister's name. Archer went up the steps and tried the back door; it was locked.

Frank was trying to question Danny. Archer asked, "Did you get anything out of him?"

Frank nodded. "He says he was on his way to Buckleys' to work. He always comes through this way, and he saw something lying there. He says Clarabel wasn't around when he left home, but he thought she was still in bed."

"Where's Lafond?"

Danny muttered that his brother-in-law had gone to Rumford the night before. Archer told Frank to go back to his house and telephone for Dr. Partridge. "Tell him to bring Burke and the ambulance," he ordered. "And then go down to Lafond's and see if he's around. If he is, bring him up. I'll stay here for the present."

Frank departed at a run.

IT began all over again, the depressing routine that follows violent death—the tiring round of questions and answers, checking of alibis, motives, opportunities.

Frank returned and reported that there was no sign of Gus Lafond at his house. Soon Warner Buckley appeared. He had noticed that something unusual was going on next door. Archer told him what had happened. It was hard to tell whether Buckley's exclamations of distress were genuine or not. Archer felt, not for the first time, that Buckley's peculiar face and mannerisms were masks that could hide a personality quite different from the one with which people had become familiar.

Burke and Dr. Partridge came with the ambulance, and the machinery that had functioned for Leonard Grimm was set in motion once more. After examining Clarabel, the doctor gave it as his opinion that she had been dead about six hours. It was then nine o'clock, and he thought she had died around three that morning. Cause for death, he told Archer, was probably skull fracture; she appeared to have fallen (or been pushed) down the long flight of steps, and had seemingly struck her head on the brick walk at the bottom. Of course, she might have been killed first and then thrown down the steps.

Archer mused, "Two murders should be easier to solve than one—more chance for blunders. Only, so far I seem to have made most of the blunders."

"You were right about Martin, though," the doctor consoled him. "He certainly didn't have anything to do with this, if he's in jail."

"Yes, this lets Martin out. But about the others . . ." He thought things now looked the blackest against Gus Lafond; the very fact of his having disappeared was enough to damn him. His description and that of his car had been immediately broadcast.

They found no objects of special note on Clarabel's body; but when she was being lifted onto the stretcher, Archer caught a flash of sunlight reflected from something that lay on the ground where she had lain. Quickly, he picked it up and put it in his pocket.

By ten-thirty, Archer had talked with Mrs. Randall over the phone, and she had promised to contact her husband. He had notified the State's Attorney of what had happened, and had arranged for the inquest.

Then the sergeant tackled Danny, who had more or less recovered his faculties. Boiled down, Danny's story was simple: The night before, he had returned from work as usual and eaten his supper with Clarabel and Gus. After supper, Gus had said that "business" called him to Rumford, had taken the car and left. Clarabel and Danny had gone to bed about ten o'clock, Danny thought. He had slept soundly all night, and had not heard any noises of any kind. He waked up at six as usual. As he ate breakfast at the Buckleys', he left the house at once. Then, on his way to work, he saw the small, dark heap which had turned out to be his sister. Archer asked if Clarabel had seemed unusually excited the night before. "She was feeling pretty good," the boy said. "She give me a quarter, and said maybe she'd be rich sometime."

Archer sent for Lucy Patterson. As when Deacon Grimm lay dead, Lucy had an alibi; almost the same alibi, in fact, for she and Ann had been together from the time they went to bed until they got up around seven that morning.

"Neither of you left the room during the night?"

Lucy shook her head. "We talked until late. We couldn't seem to get to sleep, so finally we took some pills that the doctor gave me for sleeplessness. We each took one, and then we went to sleep."

"Are you sure Miss Barbour took her pill?"

Lucy stared. "Of course. I saw her swallow it, and take a drink of water. She saw me swallow mine, too."

"And you can't tell me anything at all that might shed any light on Mrs. Lafond's death?"

"I'm sorry, Sergeant, but there isn't a thing."

"All right. I'll talk to Mr. Patterson next."

Lucy lingered. "Sergeant, you won't suspect Frank, will you, just because he was alone last night? It was just chance that I stayed with Ann. If I'd known . . ."

"You mean," Archer said, "that if you'd known there was going to be another murder, you'd have tried to give your husband an alibi instead of Miss Barbour?"

"No," Lucy returned indignantly. "Only, ordinarily I would have been able to back Frank up."

"Don't expect me to furnish an alibi," Frank said resignedly, alone with Archer. "I can't. I was sound asleep in my bed all night, but I don't expect you to believe it. 'Most any other night I'd have my wife's word for it, too; but last night she slept with Ann, so Ann's got the alibi and I'm out in the cold."

"Did you hear anything during the night?"

"I did not. I'm a sound sleeper."

Ann came in. She confirmed Lucy's statement as to how they had spent the night. Yes, she had seen Lucy take her pill, and had taken one herself. They had been together every minute between ten o'clock and seven the next morning.

"That lets them both out," Archer thought. "Unless they're lying."

RHODA BUCKLEY said, "This is a terrible thing, Sergeant Brett. Warner told me about it."

Archer sat down, but not on the davenport. "Mrs. Buckley, I want you to describe what you did last night—from eight o'clock, say, until six this morning."

Rhoda raised her hands in a gesture of helplessness. "That's the trouble. I wasn't doing anything. In the evening we listened to the radio, and I did some knitting. We went to bed about nine-thirty, but as he told you before, Mr. Buckley and I occupy separate rooms. I didn't wake up at all during the night. When I came downstairs this morning, about eight, I saw that Danny hadn't come; his breakfast things hadn't been touched. I told Warner and he went out to see to the hens. Then he saw something was going on over at Leonard's house, and he went over to see what the trouble was."

"You didn't hear or see anything unusual during the night?"

Archer thought she hesitated for the fraction of a second, but she shook her head. "No, nothing."

He decided on frankness. "I suppose you know that Forrest Martin was arrested yesterday?"

"I—yes, I heard so," Rhoda murmured.

He leaned forward. "Mrs. Buckley, why were you so sure it was Martin you saw last Saturday night?"

Her eyes widened slightly. "I didn't say I was sure, Sergeant. I told you I didn't see his face."

"Yet you were ready to swear it was Martin the other day. In other words, you believe that Martin killed Deacon Grimm, and that somebody else killed Mrs. Lafond?"

Rhoda's reply was almost deprecatory: "I hardly expect anyone to be guided by my opinion, but since you've asked for it—are you so sure Clarabel was murdered? Couldn't her death have been an accident? I understand she was found at the bottom of the back steps; perhaps she went to Leonard's house after something and caught her heel on the step, and fell."

This reasonable suggestion made the sergeant pause. After all, perhaps that was what had happened. Then he recalled the small object which he had picked up.

Mr. Buckley confirmed his wife's story, or rather, lack of a story. Like her, he had "retired" (Mr. Buckley never went to bed) about half-past nine, and had slept the sleep of the just all night, hearing and seeing nothing untoward. "My wife believes that Mrs. Lafond met her death by accident. Do you share that belief?"

Archer answered his question with another. "Is that your theory, too?"

Mr. Buckley lowered his voice a trifle. "It would not surprise me to learn that Mrs. Lafond was—ah—murdered. The—ah—wages of sin, you know."

Archer left. Neither Warner Buckley nor his wife had the shadow of an alibi for the night of Clarabel's death; but neither had they any motives for wanting her dead, so far as Archer could see.

AFTER the dishes were done that night, Frank and Lucy went upstairs. Ann was on her way up too, when Archer stopped her.

"Where is your other earring, Miss Barbour, the silver one that you lost?"

"That's right," Ann said. "I did lose one."

Archer looked at her steadily. "When did you lose it?"

Ann raised her eyebrows. "I don't know. One night when I started to take them off, it was gone."

"Are you sure it wasn't this morning that you discovered it was missing?"

"No, it was two or three days ago. What—?"

Archer held out his hand. The silver earring glinted on his palm. "It was under Clarabel's body."

Ann was suddenly rigid, her eyes fixed on the sergeant's face. She sat down. "Oh!" she exclaimed breathlessly. "So you . . . you think I killed Clarabel?"

Hysterical laughter threatened her. She gasped and choked; then she got control of herself and spoke fairly calmly. "If you found my earring under Clarabel, I don't know how it got there. But I did *not* kill Clarabel!"

Archer sighed. "I'd like to believe you, but after the way you've—er—prevaricated about things . . ."

"I didn't," Ann cried passionately. "I only . . ."

He said, "You must admit you kept things back, suppressed facts, juggled with the truth—"

Ann drew a long breath. "I told you that I killed Leonard Grimm; it isn't my fault you wouldn't believe me. Now I tell you that I didn't kill Clarabel. That's the truth, but I suppose you won't believe that, either."

Archer was silent.

"Why don't you call Golding and tell him you've got another murderer? He'll be overjoyed to hear it's me."

"Because," Archer said, "I'm trying to believe you." He went on, "You think Forrest Martin killed the Deacon, don't you?"

"No!" Ann said.

"Martin said at first that he didn't have anything to do with it. Then you learned that Golding was going to have him arrested, and you said you did it. You thought that being a woman, and not hard to look at, you'd have a softer time than a man would, and would get off easy, even if we arrested you. Then Martin said he did it after all, either because he really did do it, or to prevent our seriously considering your claim. *I* don't know who's telling the truth and who isn't."

"At least," Ann said, "you can't accuse Forrest of killing Clarabel."

"No," Archer admitted, "but you could have done it. If Golding knew about that earring, he'd be convinced you did it. As it is, he's inclined to suspect Gus Lafond. But when we catch Gus, he may have an alibi."

After a rather awkward pause, Ann said, "What motive am I supposed to have for killing Clarabel?"

"I can't think of one right off. Hang it all!" Archer exploded, "*I'm* not trying to prove you did it. But there's that damned earring—how *did* it get there?"

"That's simple enough," Ann returned. "Somebody put it there, just to make you think—what you do think. I lost it somewhere in the neighborhood, and anybody could have found it. I'm the only woman around here who wears earrings; whoever found it would recognize it."

Archer said wearily, "It's almost a week since you found Deacon Grimm dead. The inquest on Mrs. Lafond will be Monday. After that, I shall have to arrest somebody damned soon, or Golding will do it himself. I hope we'll catch Lafond. But if you know or suspect anything, anything at all, you'd better tell me pretty soon."

FROM the back, Leonard Grimm's house looked bleak and inhospitable. The big barn doors were fastened, and the small one locked; but in the back of the barn was a small square window that was innocent of glass. It wasn't very big; but Ann thought she could get through it. A large empty hogshead was within dragging distance; Ann maneuvered it into a favorable position, climbed onto it, and managed to scramble through the window. She found herself in a musty storeroom.

The door leading into the connecting shed was easy to open, but the door from this shed into the house proved to be fastened on the inside.

Ann wanted to search the Deacon's house. The idea persisted in her mind that there might be something there that would account for Clarabel's visit in the night, and for the presence of her dead body in the morning.

She rattled the latch. The door didn't fit very tightly, and she discovered that it wasn't bolted, but merely secured on the inside by a large hook and screw eye. She hunted through the shed, and found a discarded table knife. She inserted it in the crack between the door and the frame and, after some effort, succeeded in raising the hook out of the screw eye. She unlatched the door and entered Leonard Grimm's kitchen.

She unlocked the front door (the key was in the lock) and left it ajar. Then she looked around. The house was cold, and the drawn curtains made it dim and gloomy. A small, unpleasant shiver went through her.

Everything downstairs was orderly, almost too orderly. Even in the kitchen, there was none of the careless untidiness that sometimes hides a clue.

"I might have known there wouldn't be anything," Ann said to herself. "If there was anything, either Clarabel took it and hid it, or else the person who killed Clarabel got it and destroyed or hid it."

She went upstairs and glanced inside the bedrooms. Three were so stuffy and close that it was plain they had been shut up. The other, not so dusty, must have been Grimm's. A large rolltop desk stood between two windows, but it was locked. She turned to the bureau, but it contained only articles of male adornment. Next she tried the closet, where the Deacon's clothes still hung. She felt in all the pockets, but found nothing.

The house was deadly cold, and still. Shadows were collecting in the corners of the room, and Ann had to resist an increasing desire to look over her shoulder. She returned to the desk. There were a few books on top of it, and beside them an untidy heap of magazines. Ann looked through all the books, holding them wrong side up, so that any loose papers would fall out. Nothing did. She treated the magazines the same way, without results. But under the last of those periodicals appeared a large, calf-bound volume, dog-eared and dilapidated but unmistakably, an old-fashioned Family Bible. On the flyleaf was written in faded ink, "Elias Grimm, 1797." Ann's hopes rose—here was something at last! She carried the big book to the bureau, and began to hunt for the pages of Records, which every Family Bible possesses. Failing to find them in the middle of the volume, she was just turning to the back when she heard a noise. Footsteps! Somebody was coming up the stairs.

ARCHER spent an hour in Rumford, interviewing various persons who thought they had valuable revelations to make concerning Gus Lafond. But their information was worthless. The search for Gus had spread into all neighboring states, and his description had been widely circulated. But he hadn't been found.

While Archer was trying to decide whether he ought personally to join the hunt, there was a vigorous rattling of the doorknob. Captain Randall was admitted.

"I got your reports," he told the sergeant. "You've done all right. 'Twasn't your fault that fool Golding butted in. I'll talk to *him*! Now let's hear what's been done since you found the girl."

Archer told him exactly how things stood. Then the Captain said, "Main thing is to get Lafond and keep good watch on the others. No sense keeping Martin in jail, now. If he's innocent, he'll be working up a case against us for false arrest, and if he isn't—well, we'll have more chance to get evidence against him outside than cooped up in jail. Let's go see Golding."

They found Mr. Felix Golding in his office. He half rose from behind his magnificent mahogany desk, and opened his mouth, but Randall beat him to the draw.

"Look here," he snapped, "didn't I tell you not to interfere with Brett in this case? What do you mean by arresting Martin, with no more evidence against him than you had? Confession? Hell! Couldn't you see the man was just making that up because he was afraid you might arrest the girl? I want this man released right away!"

Golding said pompously, "I don't intend to release Forrest Martin."

Randall turned to Archer. "Would you just as soon step outside a minute?"

Archer complied. Then the captain stepped closer to the desk and brought his face level with Golding's. "You'd better do as I ask, because if you don't, I shall be under the necessity of informing—er—official circles, and perhaps the newspapers, too, what you were engaged in doing three weeks ago Sunday night, in a certain private—er—hideaway . . ."

Golding sprang to his feet. "You don't know a thing."

Captain Randall smiled sweetly. "Oh, yes, I do. I know several people who'll be tickled to death to testify that they saw you there; in fact, one of them took a picture."

Golding collapsed in his chair. "You wouldn't do that!"

The Captain shrugged. "I should dislike doing it," he remarked untruthfully, "but unless . . ."

"All right," Golding said. He managed a sickly smile. "Of course, I shall be—er—delighted to release anyone of whose innocence you are convinced."

The State's Attorney could move rapidly when his own interests were involved. In half an hour, Forrest Martin was leaving the jail, released under a nominal bail. Archer had left word that he could ride back to Highbrook with him, later in the afternoon. But Forrest decided to start at once and try to get a lift.

ANN'S first thought was to hide in the closet, but she realized that a one-way closet is a poor place to be cornered in. It would have to be under the bed. Clutching the Bible to her, she rolled over on one side.

The door was opening. Ann saw a pair of boots pause on the threshold. They were high, laced boots, worn over grayish-brown woolen stockings.

The boots stopped before the desk, while their wearer tried all the locks, as Ann had done, and with no more success. From ensuing sounds, Ann gathered that the reading matter on top of the desk was receiving careful attention. Was the searcher after that Bible? If so, what would he do when he found it missing?

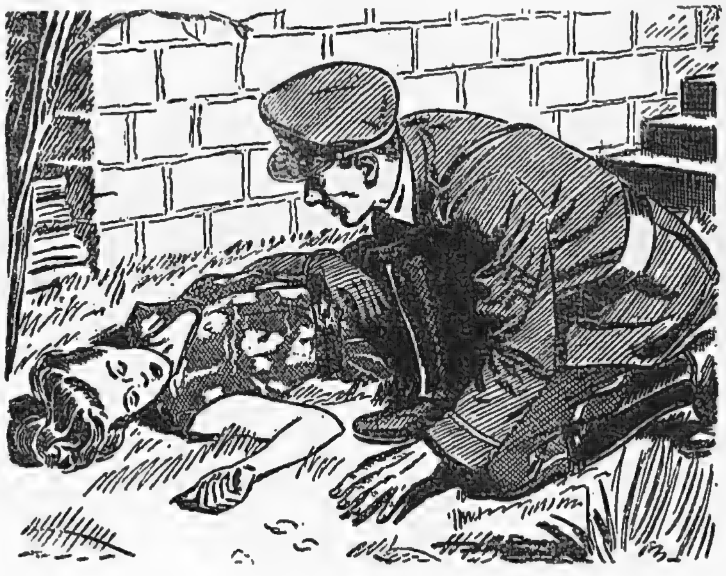
After prowling about the room for what seemed hours, the boots departed. A door closed downstairs—the outside door, Ann thought thankfully. She rolled from beneath the bed, rose, and stretched her cramped muscles.

She removed her shoes, and slipped one in each pocket. She felt her way downstairs. The hall was dark, but four faint panels of light marked the position of the front door; safety was in sight. She turned the knob—nothing happened. The door had been locked. And then again she heard footsteps.

Panic gripped her. Had she really heard anything? She strained her ears. Yes, above the pounding of her heart, she could hear somebody moving around.

She couldn't hide in the bare little hall—there was no cover—and she dared not retreat upstairs. The only thing to do was to make her way out at the back of the house, as she had come in. Just as she reached the shed door, she heard a welcome sound from the front of the house; this time she was sure it was the front door closing. Whoever it was had gone at last.

Outdoors, Ann put on her shoes. Then, hugging the Bible to her, she hurried on. She had almost reached the road when something moved in the bushes as she passed. She saw the dark, amorphous shape spring toward her. She saw the upraised arm, and started to run. But it was too late. Something came down like a thunderbolt, and struck her a glancing blow on the head.



WHEN Ann came to, she was lying on the couch in the Pattersons' sitting room. As far as she could make out, between engulfing waves of nausea, Lucy and Dr. Partridge were sitting beside her; while several other shapes, blurred and uncertain, advanced and retreated in the background. She gasped, "The Bible . . . did he get the Bible?" and tried to sit up. The doctor said, "Take it easy. Don't try to talk."

Ann said, "I can talk perfectly well." And she could, although the throbbing in her head went on, and the light was painfully bright. She was about to shut her eyes again when she glimpsed a face she had certainly not expected to see. "Forrest! How did you get here?"

"Walked," Forrest said, "and got a lift, part of the way. How do you feel?" Sitting down on the edge of the couch, he took one of Ann's hands in his.

"Not too bad. But tell me what happened."

"Luke found you lying by some bushes over in the Deacon's yard," Lucy said. "He—he thought you were dead. I called the doctor and Frank and Forrest brought you home."

Archer sent everyone out of the room but the doctor, and then said, "Now, what have you been doing?"

Ann described her visit to the Deacon's house. "So you see why I asked about the Bible," she concluded. "I thought I'd been so smart. But whoever was there knew *I* was there, or suspected it, and was only waiting for me to come out. Then he knocked me over the head and took the Bible and beat it. Anyway," she defended herself, "it shows I had the right idea. If you can find who's got that Bible, and why they wanted it, you'll know who killed Clarabel."

Archer said thoughtfully, "But I looked through that

Bible when I searched the house last Sunday. I thought I might find a will in it."

Ann asked eagerly, "Did you look at the Records of births, marriages, and deaths? That's what I was after."

As he looked puzzled, she exclaimed, "Don't you know those old Bibles always had a place for such things?"

Archer looked sheepish. "I never thought about any records," he confessed. "But some pages had been torn out of the back of that Bible. I did notice that."

Ann stared at him. "Good heavens, don't you see? That's what Clarabel was killed for! Look! Clarabel knew about something in the Bible—something that gave some clue to the Deacon's death, perhaps. She tried to blackmail somebody, and got killed for it. The murderer found out about the evidence in the Bible, and was hunting for it today; that's why he waited for me, and took it, after he'd knocked me out. He thought the evidence against him was there. But it wasn't, because Clarabel had already torn out the pages and hidden them."

Dr. Partridge said, "Archer, I believe she's hit it."

"I've got an idea," Ann cried. "Will you and Dr. Partridge do this: will you make out that I'm lots worse than you thought I was? Please do that, and I'll explain my idea the first thing in the morning."

Archer and the doctor promised. So when the other members of the household were allowed to file quietly into the sitting room after supper, they saw a very still and white-faced Ann lying on the couch.

LATE Sunday evening, when Henry Burke had ascertained that the Pattersons and Forrest were in their respective rooms, Ann staged a quick recovery, and vacated the sitting room couch. Her place was taken by a substitute. This lady consisted principally of pillows, strategically placed beneath the bedclothes and a hairdresser's dummy with a wig, which Archer had brought from Rumford that morning. (Quite a time he had had getting it, too!) The dummy's head was bandaged to resemble Ann's, and then arranged carefully on the pillow, with its wax face to the wall.

By ten o'clock the stage was set, and everything ready for any move an unknown murderer might see fit to make. Burke and Archer were ensconced behind overstuffed chairs, to wait for whatever might happen.

The house was silent now.

Suddenly Archer heard a faint noise. It sounded like a step in the kitchen. It *was* a step, and after an interval it was followed by the ghostly, subdued glow of a flashlight, shining through cloth. The glow approached the sitting room door. There was another period of silence—and darkness. Then there came the faint scraping of a shoe on a threshold. In the doorway, the flashlight was switched on again; its rays dimmed by folds of cloth, played over the room, revealing the still figure of a woman lying under blankets on the couch. The dummy looked astonishingly lifelike.

With infinite caution the power behind the flashlight crossed the room toward the couch. Archer crept up close behind the intruder.

By stealthy degrees they neared the couch, shadow and shadower, until they stood beside it. Then the unknown acted. With the light in his left hand, he took a step forward and raised his right hand. There was something in it, and the movement was swift; but Archer sprang forward and gripped the descending wrist, at the same attempting to pinion the hand that held the light.

There was a gasp and a grunt. Then a scrambling sound, and Henry Burke joined the fray. Archer kept his grip on the hand that held the unknown weapon, but the other hand was wrenched loose, and the flashlight came viciously down on the sergeant's forearm. He got his hand on it, but it slipped from his grasp and crashed to the floor. Then there was total darkness.

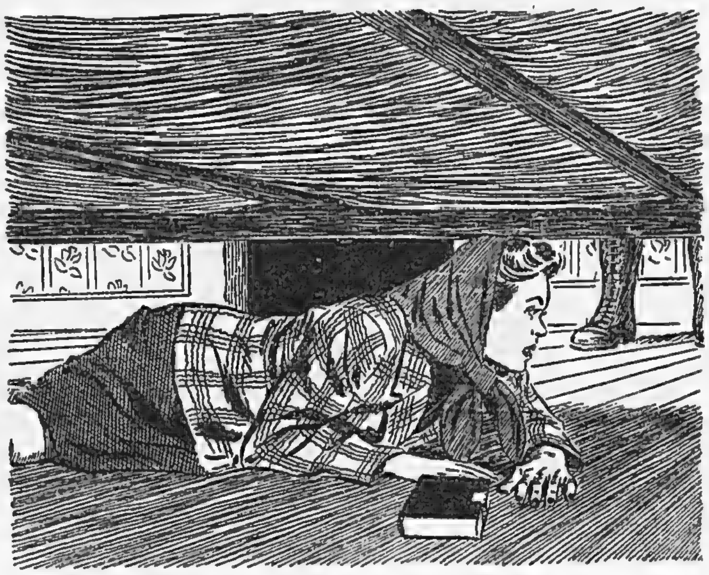
Archer and Henry were two to one, both strong men; but their opponent, whether or not his heart was pure, seemed to have the strength of ten. Archer heard Henry swearing in gasps. Frantic fingernails tore his own cheek; as he twisted away from them, a knee rose and took him unexpectedly in the groin and a booted foot cracked against his shin. Involuntarily, his grip loosened for a second, and in that instant the enemy had time and room to raise that right arm again. Archer felt a sudden, hair-raising movement against his leg, as something soft moved swiftly amid the tangle of feet. There came a swishing sound, then a grunt, and an outraged squall of pain. The unknown plunged forward off balance and a heavy, glancing blow fell on Archer's neck and shoulder. He staggered backward and almost fell, and something struck the floor with a thud. At the same time, a raging and vituperative cat flew snarling into the kitchen.

Meanwhile, Henry Burke had wrestled the unknown to the floor. There they thrashed about until they rolled against a bottle-covered table, which went over with a crash. Then they were on their feet again. Recovering his breath, Archer returned to the struggle.

Archer was aware of slamming doors and raised voices and a growing hubbub of excitement and alarm.

Burke cried: "Light a light—in the kitchen!"

The two policemen had their hands full, for the prospect of a light spurred their antagonist to more desperate resistance. But, against this wild savagery, their training and condition told. Slowly they overcame the frantic, clawing thing. Archer succeeded in twisting its hands behind its back, while a lucky blow of Burke's to the stomach gave the trooper his chance: he grabbed the creature's thrashing legs and brought it heavily to the floor. Archer had time to reach for his handcuffs and, with considerable difficulty, he snapped them on. "Get a light," he gasped. A lamp had appeared in the kitchen; excited voices clamored at the door. Alert for further trouble, Archer hauled their captive to its feet. A match sputtered and the room sprang into light.



Archer and Burke were prepared for almost anything. They needed to be, as their unbelieving eyes stared at the grotesque figure before them . . . Rhoda Buckley. Rhoda Buckley, her face a mask of fury, her hair disheveled, while from her lips poured a stream of alternate gibberish and words that were all too intelligible. She wore a man's boots and breeches, and her man's jacket had been torn in the struggle. On the floor lay the weapon that had dropped from her hand when she stumbled over the cat: a small canvas bag, knotted at one end and filled with birdshot—a homemade blackjack.

Archer turned to Burke. "Get some rope, Henry. And you folks—" he turned to the thunderstruck audience in the doorway, "please stay in the kitchen. Except you, Doctor; I'll need your help." Half an hour later they took Rhoda Buckley away, still screaming obscenities.

A week later, Archer Brett, on a Saturday night, drove once more into the Pattersons' dooryard. His knock was answered by Frank Patterson. "Come right in, Brett. Glad to see you. We thought maybe you'd forgotten us since you got all those newspaper write-ups. How's it feel to be famous?"

Archer followed him into the warm sitting room. Lucy, who was standing with a plate of sandwiches in one hand and a pitcher of milk in the other, set them both down in order to welcome him properly. Ann and Forrest, sitting extremely close on the couch, rose to greet him warmly.

Urged to stay, Archer sat down in the easychair by the fire. "Well," he said, "I knew you folks would want to hear all about what happened, but this is the first chance I've had to get over."

"All we know is what we read in the papers," said Frank. "And that seemed to leave a lot unexplained."

Archer nodded. "They've got Mrs. Buckley down at the Hospital for the Insane under observation," he said; "but it'll probably be months before those cockeyed alienists make up their minds about her. In my opinion she's sane, but she knows that if she can kid that bunch into calling her crazy, with some fancy tag to it, she won't have to stand trial for the murders. Well, I expect I'd better tell you the story from the beginning. We finally found those Bible pages, Miss Barbour."

Ann leaned eagerly forward. "Then I *was* right!" She glanced at Forrest, who said, "It's Mrs. Martin now, Sergeant, since last Wednesday."

Archer offered his congratulations, and then went on, "Yes, while we were waiting here that Sunday night to nab the killer, Haley was searching the Lafond place. It was the family records, as Miss Bar—Mrs. Martin thought. But only one was important. And that was the record of the marriage of Leonard Grimm to Rhoda Temple in New York City, twenty-six years ago. And with it was a copy of the marriage certificate.

"After that," he continued, when the exclamations had subsided, "with the help of the New York police we managed to piece out enough facts to make subsequent events pretty clear. Rhoda Buckley was born in New York, and when she got old enough went on the stage—vaudeville, mostly. It was then that Leonard Grimm met her and fell for her. He must have fallen damned hard to actually marry Rhoda, for she had a bad reputation even then, and had already been mixed up in a stabbing case. But she put it over on him. He evidently come to pretty quick after they were married, for he left her almost immediately. She won't open her mouth about her life and affairs, so I don't see how we'll ever find out just what did happen. But Rhoda never got a divorce. And Grimm never bothered to get one, either; he could get plenty of women without marrying them.

"Well, for a long time after that there was no trace of Rhoda; the next fact we learned was that she was playing in a burlesque show in Boston, when it was closed up. About eight years ago, she turned up in Rumford and somehow happened to meet old Buckley. He looked like the answer to her prayers, and the means of getting what she wanted more than anything else on earth: plenty of money and a nice, respectable position in society. Rhoda was clever, and a skillful actress. And she was still good-looking, for her age. Buckley'd never had much to do with women, so he was taken in, as better men have been before him. Rhoda married him and his money, and was all set for life—she thought. Then he fixed up this place in the country; there was Grimm, right next door!

"RHODA must have felt she was sitting on a volcano. Any time the Deacon wanted, he could show that marriage certificate—and where would her nice, secure, respectable life be then? But apparently the Deacon didn't say anything. We don't know what happened to bring things to a head. Maybe Grimm needed some extra cash and put the pressure on her. Anyway, she killed him."

Frank broke in. "But why in my barn?"

Archer shrugged. "We think she made some excuse and arranged to meet him there. Maybe she suggested going there if she was planning the Deacon's death. Or, more likely, she didn't intend to kill him at first, but did it during a quarrel; that would account for her using the pitchfork instead of coming prepared with a weapon. Either way, she'd have no trouble doing it; she's plenty strong, as Burke and I found out! Then, after she'd done it, she went home to bed. And there was nothing to connect her with the business—no motive or weapon. I didn't suspect her, even when she had no alibi and acted so anxious to pin the crime on Martin. It was she, by the way, who sent word to Golding that I wouldn't arrest Martin, and egged him on to make the arrest himself."

"She was clever," Ann said.

"Yes," Archer said, "she *was* clever. But she couldn't know that Grimm had kept that record of their marriage, and had perhaps told Clarabel about it. I'm not sure how much Clarabel knew, but she knew enough so that when the Deacon was killed she saw her chance. Clarabel tried to blackmail Rhoda, and Rhoda killed her. Clarabel had a key to the Deacon's house, and Rhoda agreed to meet her there at a certain time in the night, and pay her a sum of money—a thousand dollars, I suspect, from what Clarabel hinted. But Rhoda came prepared with that homemade life preserver of hers and instead of getting the thousand dollars, Clarabel got—that. Then Rhoda dumped Clarabel's body down the steps, and put the silver earring, that she'd picked up somewhere, under it. Then she took Clarabel's key and went home; we found the key in her breeches pocket. It was that key that enabled her to get into the Deacon's house on the Saturday, when Miss—Mrs. Martin was there."

Mrs. Martin interrupted. "I think, after all we've been through, Sergeant, that you'd better call me 'Ann'."

Archer thanked her. "Planting that earring," he said, "was a mistake. Like most murderers, she couldn't leave well enough alone, and she tried to involve—er—Ann in the second crime just as she'd tried to involve you, Martin, in the first. But she couldn't find the evidence she was after, even when she got the Bible, because Clarabel had already taken it out and hidden it. Then Ann, in self-defense, helped us to the solution: she suggested the trap, and we caught Rhoda."

"What about Gus, Sergeant?" Lucy asked.

"Gus was lying low, in a friend's place, in Rumford. He and the friend had done business together the night before, and they celebrated its conclusion by getting pretty well soused. By the time they'd sobered up next day, the friend had seen a newspaper with the report of Clarabel's death in it, and Gus decided the safest thing for him to do was to lie low." He hesitated. "I hadn't ought to tell you this, but Gus has been distributing cocaine, and Leonard Grimm was one of his customers. So now he's being investigated by the G-men."

Archer stood up. "I must be getting along. I wish you all luck, and I'll be seeing you sometime soon."

LUCY and Frank had gone to bed. Ann and Forrest lingered in the sitting room. After some intermittent talk, Ann referred to Archer Brett, and how sensibly he had handled things. "I don't believe," she said, "that he ever really suspected you. But when you insisted on being arrested, he couldn't help himself. I suppose I was a fool to say I killed the Deacon, and be so—so dramatic, but it seemed the only thing to do. But . . ."

"Honey," Forrest said, "you didn't really think I killed the Deacon, did you?"

"Of course not. You've got a temper, and you might hit a man. But you'd never kill a man. Besides. . . ."

"Besides what, Honey?"

"Besides—I killed him." Her voice was very low. "I did it—just the way I told the sergeant, and all of you." She gripped his hand in both hers. "Forrest, I ought to have told the whole truth that first night, but I—I didn't have the courage. Then you came back, and I got paid for being such a coward, for everybody thought you did it. I knew then I had to tell the truth. But when I did, they wouldn't believe me! I—I—"

His arms tightened around her. She went on. "You know it really was an accident; I hadn't any idea of hurting him. When I picked up the pitchfork, I didn't think he'd try to—to touch me again. Forrest, I was afraid of the Deacon. His eyes. . . ." She shivered. "Darling, ought I tell the authorities all about it once more?"

Forrest smoothed her hair. "Of course not. Rhoda killed the Lafond girl, all right, and she tried hard enough to kill you. She's a bad egg, and she deserves all she may get. You didn't kill Leonard Grimm on purpose, Honey; you did it in self-defense, and you told the truth about it—it wasn't your fault that they wouldn't believe you. It doesn't matter a tinker's hoot to me, and nobody else ever needs to know. So let's forget it, shall we?"

He kissed her; then he blew out the light.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

by Helen Greenwood

THE HUCKSTERS proves conclusively that **Frederic Wakeman** is not a one-book author. Shore Leave, despite its striking and memorable quality, was uneven. This second novel shows a maturer technique and a deeper insight.

Frederic Wakeman

The Hucksters will sell. It has all the elements that make a smashingly successful book: clever satire, Hollywood, radio, sex. Beyond that, moreover, it is a penetrating piece of work. Wakeman has a rare gift for capturing an emotion and making it so real that it reaches out and grips the reader.

The central emotion here is fear. Victor Norman is an advertising man who joins the firm of Kimberly and Maag, a company that exists on their Beautee Soap client, Evan Llewlyn Evans. The picture that Wakeman draws of the sadistic Evans and the terror he inspires may, in retrospect, seem exaggerated, but it's so cleverly done that for the moment it seems plausible. And so does Kimberly, an agency partner, who takes out his pitiable terror and frustration in drink and cheap floozies.

But it is Vic Norman, hard-boiled and cynical, completely aware of the phoniness of the whole thing—wryly amused by it, but ready to take advantage of it—who makes Wakeman's novel what it is. After Vic is approached by both members in the firm to cut the other out and form a new partnership, he thinks: "Kimberley and Norman . . . Maag and Norman. Either way it sounded like a vaudeville team. One thing, if he ever teamed up with Maag it wouldn't take long to change the name to Victor Norman, Inc.

"That is, if a person were the type person who went in for that type thing."

The Hucksters would have been a "better type book" had Wakeman omitted Vic's regenerating love affair with a "good woman." Kay Dorrance is every cynic's idea of the perfect female—devoted to her children, she is nevertheless carried away by a mad passion for Vic. The dialogue here gets a bit sticky: " 'You can't start any arguments with me,' Vic said fondly. 'Frightful little girl. You are a frightful little girl, you know.'

" 'I am not. I'm an abandoned creature,' she said happily. 'Didn't I ever tell you I was an abandoned creature?' " However, it wouldn't be a Wakeman novel without some good bedroom scenes.

Rinehart and Company, Inc., New York, Toronto. Price $2.50.

THE STRANGER is the first novel of a promising young French writer, **Albert Camus,** who became known as a journalist for his country's underground movement during the war.

Albert Camus

Meursault, whose story The Stranger is, lives in Algiers. He is pictured as a most commonplace person. However, nothing in life fazes him: his mother dies; a girl falls in love with him; he unintentionally murders an Arab; he faces execution for his crime—and remains indifferent to all of it. He is, the author seems to be saying, nothing more than a victim of his destiny.

Some readers may find Camus' philosophy, one which rejects the existence of free will, obscure and overly pessimistic; others will be attracted by the simplicity of his tale and the clarity of his writing.

Alfred A. Knopf, New York. Price $2.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane

F	A	R	M	E	R	E	T	T	E	■	R	A	S	H
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A	I	N	T	■	A	D	O	B	E	■	N	I	R	A
S	I	N	S	■	N	E	W	S	D	E	A	L	E	R

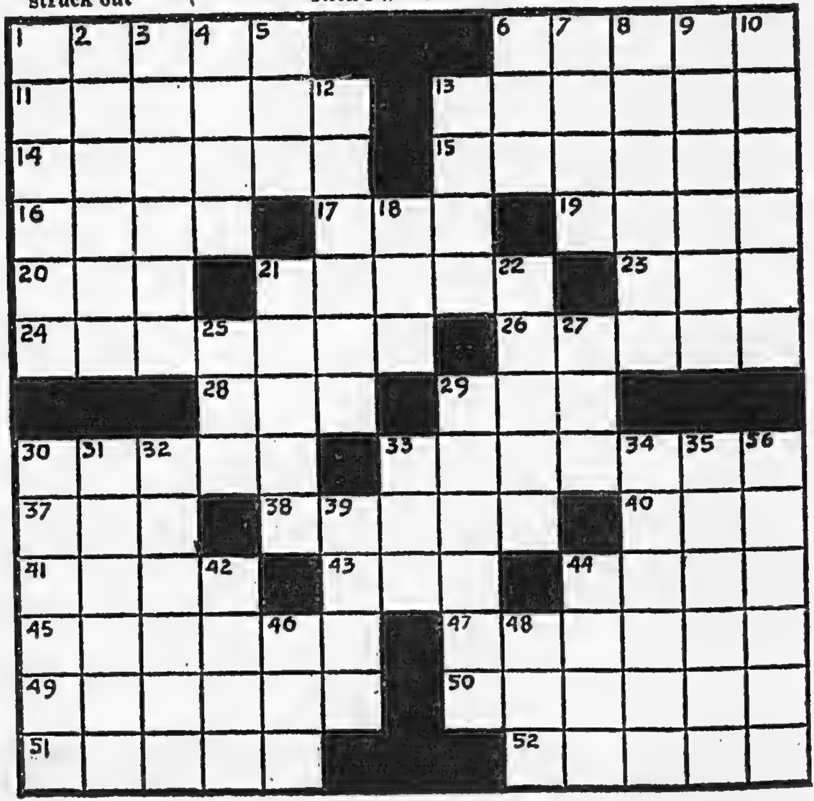
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 Flies and catwalks are part of the what?
6 What former slave became a world literary figure?
11 What's the Greek name for Greece?
13 Prescott, Dawes, and who rode in a famous race with the British?
14 What French physicist gave his name to an electrical unit?
15 Which of the three musketeers was educated for the Church?
16 As a safety precaution, most small planes are built what-proof?
17 X per cent of MXX
19 Kind of radio commercial
20 CII is what percentage of MXX?
21 Snare (anag.)
23 'Ot, hain't it?
24 Who gave Theseus the thread that got him out of Minos' labyrinth?
26 Mud soup'd be a what?
28 Translate: Stimulated by a volatile colorless liquid (C_2H_5OH) burning taste and tongue-loosening properties (colloq.)
29 What little thing had roast beef and also none?
30 Zeno was the first what?
33 You'd address whom in England as "most noble" or "your Grace"?
37 The number 72 usually suggests what sporting term?
38 Complete: —— is no joy in Mudville—Mighty Casey has struck out
40 The accidental killing of what in Egypt was punishable by death?
41 Iowa town; intellectual center
43 Very much of a prefix
44 Groucho Marx once promised a girl he'd be as what as a two-dollar cornet?
45 The Italians call Dubrovnik what?
47 Tripe's written about fantastic person (anag.)
49 "Le Dope" scrammed with Dad's darling (anag.)
50 Arranged in rows
51 Jane Austen wrote of what and Sensibility?
52 Complete Buddha's creed: All —— are cared for!

VERTICAL

1 Complete with flower name: —— cottage small by a waterfall!
2 According to the Red Queen, what remains if you take a bone from a dog?
3 Italian mountain troops
4 Traditional fairy convention hall
5 The helix, tragus, antitragus, antihelix, and lobe comprise a what?
6 Plane prefix
7 Whose ascent is immortal literature?
8 Complete the Marine motto: —— Fideles!
9 The American hangbird is also known as the what?
10 A druggist's swizzle stick's a what?
12 Straight line that intersects another line, curve, or figure
13 Sadie Thompson's the heroine of what play?
18 Jehovic wrath
21 France's Henry IV issued the what of Nantes, granting the Protestants freedom of conscience?
22 Marjoram's a what?
25 The Arab bowler wanted 'em set up in the other what?
27 Disgusting Navaho expression
29 A prissy artist or educator is known as a what?
30 In bowling, all ten pins knocked down by two successive balls
31 The hot dog of Chihuahua is the what?
32 The University of what is in the town of Eugene?
33 Kraut article
34 What's to write in French?
35 Fried quickly with little grease (from the French verb to jump)
36 What are always milk white for princesses of fairy tales?
39 Name the Brooklyn pitcher who pitched a no-hit game in '46
42 Fills puss at eventide (anag.)
44 Where would you never look for a pheasant's nest?
46 Religious bailiwick
48 A lovely female limb is vulgarly known as a what?



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

gay!

glittering!

glorious!

Loaded with laughs! Sprinkled with sparkling songs! Gorgeous with those bewitching beauties, the Goldwyn Girls...And Danny Kaye, funnier than ever, as the bewildered milkman who fumbles his way to fame and fortune.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN
presents
DANNY KAYE
in

The Kid from Brooklyn

IN TECHNICOLOR
with
VIRGINIA MAYO • VERA-ELLEN
THE GOLDWYN GIRLS
WALTER ABEL • EVE ARDEN • STEVE COCHRAN
FAY BAINTER • LIONEL STANDER
Adapted by Don Hartman and Melville Shavelson
From the screenplay by Grover Jones, Frank Butler and Richard Connell • Based on a play by Lynn Root and Harry Clork
Directed by NORMAN Z. McLEOD
Released through RKO RADIO PICTURES, INC.

STALIN'S BOSSES

Continued from Page 13

more important, Molotov also is a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party—the Politburo—that all-powerful junta which actually rules Russia. In foreign affairs, for instance, neither Molotov nor Stalin alone determines the broad outlines of Russia's foreign policy. Within the Politburo is a four-man committee on foreign affairs which in turn is responsible to the Politburo as a whole. Molotov and Stalin serve on that committee with their fellow Politburo members Zhdanov and Mikoyan.

And, contrary to popular belief, the Politburo is *not* stuffed with Stalin stooges. No assembly of stooges could wield the tremendous personal power that each Politburo member does. And this very fact lies behind Russia's unpredictable fluctuations of policy.

In Russia, the Communist Party dictates all policy, and the Politburo is the controlling body of the Communist Party. There is no appeal from its decisions.

The Politburo has fourteen members. Five of these act as alternate members. The alternates are necessary because all Politburo sessions demand a quorum of nine. Meetings take place in the Kremlin in Moscow. All such sessions are secret and the decisions reached never become known publicly until they are carried out by the various executive departments of the Soviet government.

MEMBERSHIP in the Politburo is virtually for life. Only death from natural causes or assassination can remove a member, as in the cases of Lenin, Kirov, Sverdlov, Uritzky, and Djerzhinsky. However, such members as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, and Yagoda were taken off the roster via execution for treasonable activity. Since the great purge trials of the prewar period when the Politburo membership was shaken up violently, no member has departed.

The most widely known Politburo member is, of course, Stalin. In his capacity as Secretary General of the Communist Party he was also for many years the presiding officer of the Politburo. In 1943 he relinquished this post to his best friend and right-hand man, Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov. His long presidency over the Politburo deliberations led to the widespread popular belief that Stalin dictated all Politburo decisions. This definitely was not the case in the past, and neither is it the case today. It is true that Stalin's enormous personal prestige gives him a weighty voice in all Politburo deliberations, but the times have been many when he has been unable to swing the majority opinion of the Politburo. In all such instances he has accepted the majority will of his Politburo associates. The very set-up of the Politburo and the manner in which it operates prove conclusively that Stalin is *not* a personal dictator, as many people outside Russia are prone to regard him.

WITH what authority does William van Narvig, the author of Stalin's Bosses, speak about Russia? In his younger days Mr. van Narvig formed personal friendships with several of the men who later rose to power in the Soviet Union; men like Shvernik, Zhdanov, and Shcherbakov. Some of these friendships have persisted over the years. They, together with his many years' experience in Russia, have given Mr. van Narvig a close-up of Russian affairs and policies.

In addition, he visits the Soviet Union periodically to keep abreast of developments, and was last in Russia eighteen months ago. His latest book—Two Worlds—is to be published soon by the Ziff-Davis Publishing Co.—THE EDITOR.

The Politburo is actually the self-appointed super-Cabinet of Russia, which is the reason it is able to exercise undisputed control over all Russian life. And it can function unchallenged because its members have distributed among themselves all the important Cabinet posts.

With Russia now a great military power, any group of men who want to control the country must first of all retain full control of the military. Politburo member Stalin is commander in chief of the country's armed forces. He is also Minister of Defense. These two posts Stalin holds not by virtue of any personal accomplishments in the military field, but by political design.

However, in a country where everything must be subordinated to the political dictate of the dictatorial power—the Communist Party—nominal control of the armed forces alone is not enough. And so Politburo member Shcherbakov, with the rank of a general although he never had any military education, is chief of the Political Department of the Red Army.

But the organization of the Army as an obedient tool of the Communist Party goes even deeper. Politburo member Zhdanov, with the rank of a colonel general, is the co-ordinator of all party and Army policy; in short, he sees to it that the Red Army remains the true executor of the policies of the Communist Party.

So, acting on the principle that no one man should have absolute control of any vital phase of national life, the control of Russia's armed forces is divided among three Politburo comrades—Stalin, Zhdanov, and Shcherbakov—the three most influential Politburo members.

The dictatorship of the Communist Party over the Russian people has been achieved by the party's absolute control over all propaganda means—the press, the radio, motion pictures, etc. It is being maintained by the same means with Politburo member Shcherbakov as high chief of all Soviet propaganda. However, in this capacity he does not stand alone. Politburo member Zhdanov has an important say in all propaganda matters, especially in the education of the youth of Russia, where propaganda plays so important a role. Since Shcherbakov happens to be Zhdanov's brother-in-law, co-operation between the two is easily achieved.

RUSSIA is a police state, with all police power centralized in the Secret State Police—the NKVD—the most formidable police machine in all history. By comparison, Hitler's Gestapo was a poor imitation. The NKVD guards the Communist Party dictatorship against treason and is the watchdog of all party and government functionaries, including even the Politburo members themselves. For years Politburo member Beria, with the rank of a marshal of the Soviet Union, was Minister of the Interior and chief of the NKVD. With the entry of all countries of eastern Europe and the Balkans into the Soviet sphere of influence, the Russian police task has gained even larger proportions. Beria delegated the direct supervision of the NKVD to Colonel General Kruglev and has undertaken the politically even more important task of integrating the police system of the satellite nations into that of the Soviet Union.

The Communist Party controls Russian life in another important particular—food production. Politburo member Andreyev is Minister of Agriculture. All state and collective farm managers throughout the Soviet Union are responsible to him. But the endless thousands of food-processing establishments are under the jurisdiction of another Politburo member—Mikoyan, as Minister of Food Industry. So is the food-rationing system, although all major changes of rationing and price policy are determined by the Politburo in full session. In the final analysis it is the Politburo which decides who in Russia eats, and how much.

Politburo member Voznessensky, in his dual capacity as chief of the State Planning Commission and chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, is the man who dictates all economic planning in Russia and in her satellite nations.

Since all economy in Russia is nationalized in the hands of the Communist Party, the men in charge of executing the economic plans naturally control practically every civilian job in Russia. For instance, Politburo member Andreyev, as Minister of Agriculture, is in supreme charge of all farm jobs, for there is no longer private farming in Russia. Politburo member Mikoyan, in his dual capacity as Minister of Food Industry and Minister of Light Industry, controls all jobs in food production, textile, and affiliated fields. He also has charge of domestic trade, which includes the endless thousands of government stores throughout the Soviet Union, where no privately owned stores may exist. Politburo member Kaganovich—incidentally, the only Jew in the Politburo—in his dual capacity as Minister of Heavy Industry and Minister of Transportation, controls all the jobs in the country's mines, steel mills, and affiliated heavy industries as well as in transportation.

Even the labor movement is government sponsored and controlled, and since there is only one workers' organization in Russia, Politburo member Shvernik, who runs the labor show, is a sort of American equivalent of Green, Murray, and Lewis plus. The labor organization of about 25,000,000 members must have Shvernik's approval before it can act on anything. And though Shvernik is now President of the Soviet Union, he continues to keep an eye on the labor organization.

THE Soviet Union is essentially Russian in character. However, only some 60 per cent of its population is strictly Russian. The remaining 40 per cent is composed of alien nationalities. The most important of these, and the one whose separatist aspirations have caused trouble in the past, is the Ukrainian. Politburo member Krushchov, a Ukrainian himself, in his dual capacity as president of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and boss of the Ukrainian party machine, takes care of the task of integrating Ukrainian policies with those of Russia. The Politburo also has taken direct charge of Russia's important ventures into eastern Europe and the Balkans.

In a country like Russia, where one-party dictatorship is supreme, ironclad political organization is vital. And it is Politburo member Malenkov who enforces party discipline. As head of the Organizational Bureau of the Communist Party he sees to it that the right party leaders—from the Politburo point of view—step into positions of responsibility. It was he who conducted the great party purges.

The party itself is headed by a four-man party secretariat, consisting of Politburo members Stalin, Zhdanov, Malenkov, and Andreyev. No man who is not a Politburo member has a chance of slipping into the secretariat. In its broader aspects the Communist Party is organized in regional political machines. The two largest and most important are those of Moscow and Leningrad. The third most important is in the Ukraine. These machines are all headed by Politburo members. And in the three machines is concentrated 90 per cent of the power wielded by the Communist Party.

While the Communist Party stands supreme over everything in Russia, its power is exercised through two branches of the Soviet government—the legislative and the executive. The legislative branch is the Supreme Soviet, which roughly corresponds to the U. S. Congress. The chairman of the Supreme Soviet is at the same time President of the Soviet Union. For twenty-seven years this post was held by Politburo member Kalinin. Politburo member Shvernik succeeded Kalinin last March when the latter retired because of ill health. Kalinin died on June 3. All other Politburo members, including Stalin, are vice-chairmen of the Supreme Soviet. The legislative machinery of the Supreme Soviet, exercised through its Presidium, is completely in their hands. Not one legislative move can be undertaken without their knowledge and prior consent.

The executive branch of the Soviet government is the Council of Ministers, meaning the Cabinet. Chairman of the Council of Ministers, or Premier of the Soviet Union, is Politburo member Stalin. According to the Soviet Constitution, all members of the Council of Ministers are appointed by the Supreme Soviet *on his recommendation.* Politburo member Molotov is executive vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers, or Vice-Premier of the Soviet Union. The other three vice-chairmen are Politburo members Zhdanov, Malenkov, and Mikoyan. All important ministerial posts are held by Politburo members.

These, then, are the men of the Politburo—Andreyev, Beria, Kaganovich, Krushchov, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Shcherbakov, Shvernik, Stalin, Voroshilov, Voznessensky, Zhdanov, and Kalinin up until his death. They are the men who actually rule Russia.

But, you say, all this doesn't explain why Stalin is represented to the world and to the Russians as Russia's supreme leader. Aren't his achievements glorified throughout the country? Isn't his portrait shown wherever the Red Army moves in and the Russian tongue is spoken?

These questions must be answered in the affirmative. But they are questions dealing with appearances only. There is a difference between propaganda and fact.

THE mass mind craves hero worship. It demands one strong personality to worship as the supreme leader, just as in a show the public demands a star. And especially the Russian mass mind craves a national hero—a successor to the Czar. It wants a living symbol of the great glory of Russia.

In the interval between the two great wars the Russian masses did not have such a symbol. It was a time when the top Bolshevik leaders never knew to what extent they could depend on the solidity of their rule. They could not even trust large sections of their own party. It was a time when Stalin imposed his ruthless will on all dissenters, who either had to submit or be purged. But even in those days Stalin could not impose his will alone; he always had to rely on the help of his like-minded partners. And after the last great purge, the Communist leaders knew the Russian masses had to have something more than just the Communist Party to look up to.

The war did for the Politburo and its Communist Party what nothing else could have done. It brought a great resurgence of Russian nationalism. It led to the re-establishment

of the state-dominated Orthodox Church. It made for the rallying of all groups within the population around the leadership. And in this great process of amalgamation between the Communist doctrines and all things anciently Russian, the Russian masses received *The Symbol.*

The men of the Politburo have all gone through the mill and emerged stark realists. They know that their rule is safe so long as they stick together. They also know the utter impracticability of concentrating the national spotlight on a group of fourteen men and having them all share equally in glorification. And so the spotlight is concentrated on Stalin—"the Man of Steel."

In the Soviet Union, both the President and the Premier are figureheads. Stalin is not The Symbol by reason of his being Premier; he is The Symbol by virtue of tacit agreement among the Politburo members. The Politburo retains its absolute powers. Most of the decisions promulgated in Stalin's name have never been suggested by him, and some were even opposed by him in Politburo councils.

IT is entirely against the Communist conception of things to have the supreme leadership concentrated in the hands of any one man. But the prime consideration of the Communist Party in Russia is to maintain an unbreakable hold over the Russian masses and thus continue in power. If the masses demand a living symbol, the Communist Party is perfectly willing to let them have that symbol, just so long as the man chosen for the symbol is one of the great party leaders. When Stalin dies, the Politburo will have a new symbol to take his place, probably Zhdanov. But whoever it is, he will be a Politburo member.

According to the Soviet Constitution, Stalin in his capacity of Premier wields less personal power than does the President of the United States. In practice, most of the power commonly attributed to Stalin belongs to the Politburo collectively. Once the Politburo has made a decision, this decision remains unalterable unless it is changed by the Politburo's majority vote. Today, even Stalin, with all his tremendous personal prestige, cannot override it.

To the rest of the world Politburo policy remains mysterious for the simple reason that all Politburo decisions are made in secrecy. A semblance of confusion is all part of the scheme; the Politburo does not want the rest of the world to know. In Moscow, Stalin makes a speech praising the U.N. because the Politburo wanted him to do so. Yet at the same time Molotov issues the Politburo's instructions to Vishinsky; the latter relays them to New York, and Andrei Gromyko takes a walk from the U.N. Security Council.

The world is left guessing, which is just what the Politburo wants.

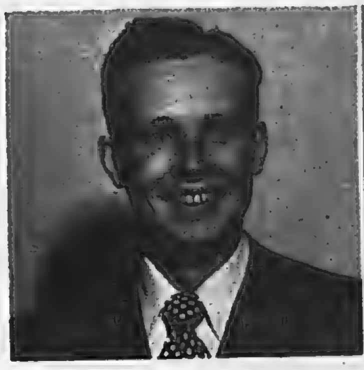
THE END

Clothes Clinic

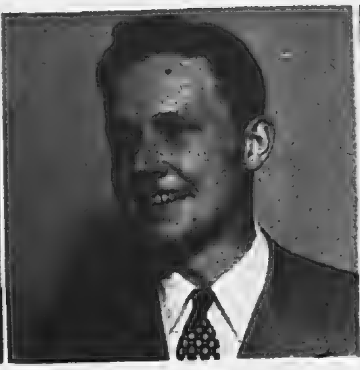
By P. B. Juster

CAN YOU TIE THAT?

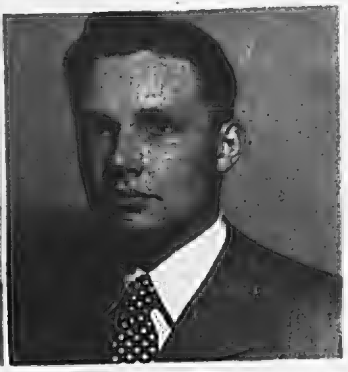
KNOT QUIZ



1. Right ☐ Wrong ☐

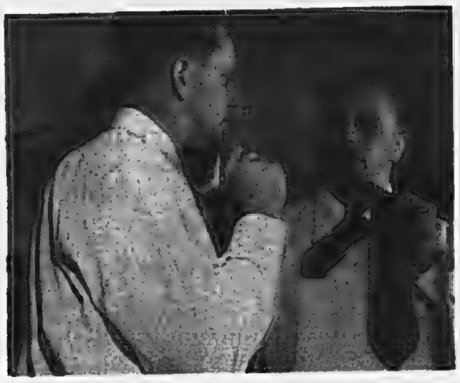


2. Right ☐ Wrong ☐

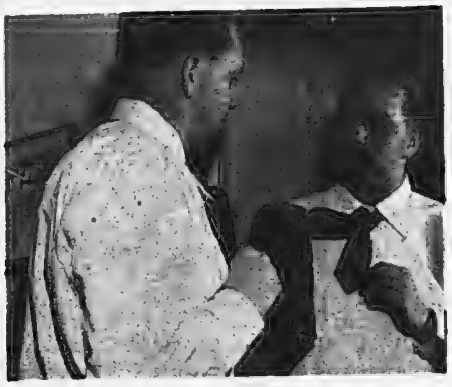


3. Right ☐ Wrong ☐

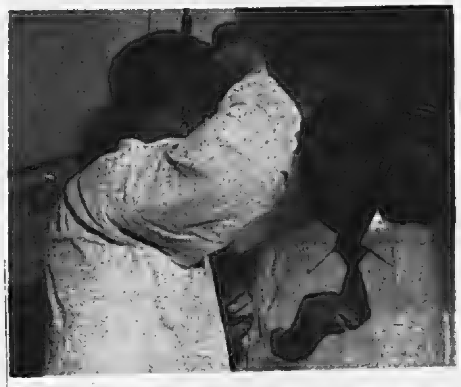
HOW TO TIE A WINDSOR KNOT



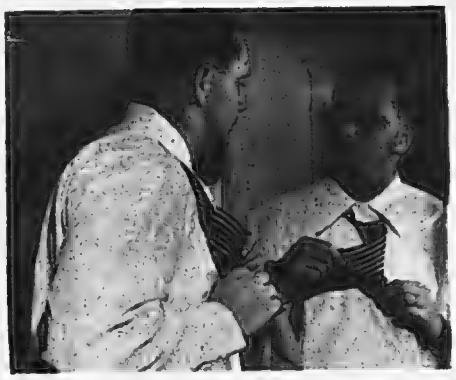
(*a*) Wide end starts a foot below, goes over front and through V.



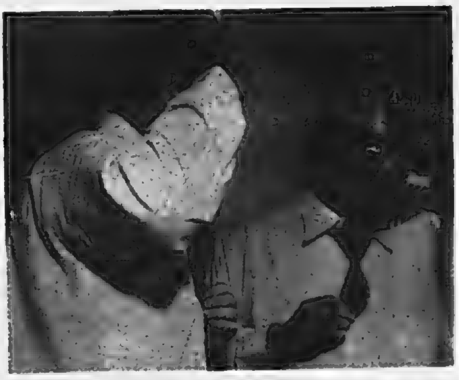
(*b*) Bring the wide end over again, but this time it goes in the back.



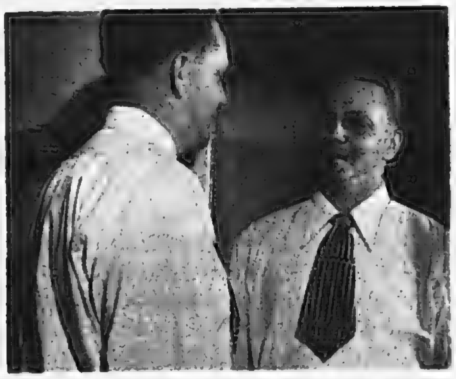
(*c*) Bring tie up and lead down through V, as shown in photo.



(*d*) Carry it over across the front to form the front of the Windsor knot.



(*e*) Lead up in back through V and pull down through front of knot.



(*f*) Arrange neatly and carefully tighten in the usual manner.

HERE ARE THE ANSWERS:

1. RIGHT: It's the Windsor knot, a perfect match for this wide-spread collar. **2. WRONG:** It's the same tie . . . the same wide-spread collar . . . but we've switched to the four-in-hand. The small knot is lost with this wide collar. **3. WRONG:** The wide Windsor knot tends to bulk up this small collar. A four-in-hand would fit better and look better.

BUGLE ON THE HILL

Continued from Page 23

share of the Appendix. Their ideas are not confined to the atomic bomb, Russia, housing, labor, and other current problems. The boldface headlines, which they usually write, over their extensions of remarks give a clue to the variety of their interests: Does Bowles Know What He Is Talking About?; The Lake Breezes Whisper; Where Are We Going to Get the Money?; White Elephants versus Work Horses; Destruction of Fish and Wildlife in the Upper Mississippi River by Lowering Pool Levels; Speech Before Fourth Ward Republican Club of Marion County; Parasites in Oysters—a Serious New Enemy of the Oyster; and The G.I.s Can't All Be Wrong About Unfair Demobilization—Just Read This Letter.

The ladies are represented, too. The Hon. Clare Boothe Luce recently inserted an article called Saga of the People's Al. It was a piece about Alfred E. Smith which she wrote in 1932 for Vanity Fair, a publication now deceased. Later the Hon. Reid F. Murray of Wisconsin gallantly introduced a laudatory editorial from a Connecticut paper on "Mrs. Luce and Lincoln."

SPEECHES don't need to be a congressman's own, or even new. The Hon. Compton I. White of Idaho, for instance, a faithful Record contributor, reprinted serially in 1943 a speech delivered fifty years before by Senator Francis M. Cockrell of Missouri on Money—the Most Important Issue in the World Today. It had appeared once in the Record for 1893. Its 1943 reprinting took twenty-eight installments.

In the old days, members made sure that [Applause] and [Laughter] appeared at appropriate intervals in their speeches. Sometimes they appeared even in the undelivered extended remarks of the Appendix. A West Virginia statesman, for instance, put in his extended remarks, "[Prolonged applause on the Democratic side and consternation among the Republicans.]" Now the House Rules ban such interpolations. In the Senate they are inserted judiciously by the official shorthand reporters.

The actual debates on the floor of both houses are transcribed with great skill and speed by the official reporters. The dean of the Senate's staff is James W. Murphy, who has been at it half a century. He takes not only professional but family pride in his work. For there has been a Murphy in the Senate chamber for ninety-eight years. The first was Dennis F. Murphy, uncle of the present Murphy, who started in 1848 reporting for the Congressional Globe, privately owned predecessor of the Record.

The reporter sits near the senator who is speaking. At the end of ten

Never mind his yacht... how's his '6NX-APPEAL'
DOUBLE EDGE 4 for 10¢
MADE BY 6NX PROCESS
SINGLE EDGE 4 for 10¢
STAR DOUBLE BLADES
STAR Famous Since 1880
Single Edge STAR BLADES
STAR
STAR BLADES

"6NX-APPEAL" IS CHEEK-APPEAL... stepped up to the Nth degree! You get it every time you shave with Star Double Edge Blades. The *only* blades made by the amazing 6NX Process! So keen, so long-lasting, *they make your double edge razor perform miracles!*

IS YOURS a *single edge* razor? Use Star Single Edge Blades! The blades *millions* of men have proved with *billions* of shaves!

Star Division, American Safety Razor Corp., Brooklyn 1, N. Y.

minutes he is relieved by another reporter, and retires to dictate his notes to a recording machine. Typists prepare the manuscript, or folio, for him to scan and correct. If the senator doesn't send for his remarks, they go to Murphy and then to the Government Printing Office.

Murphy and his associates frequently smooth out extemporaneous remarks, and the senators like it. Once the late Huey Long used bad English in a speech. He did it not only once but three times. Murphy asked him whether to let it go. "Oh, you fix it up for the Record as you always do," said Long, "but the galleries like that stuff!"

IN the House, with nearly four times the Senate's membership, procedure is a little different. Allister Cochrane, with forty-four years of service, and his associates spell one another at five-minute intervals. The reporter on duty usually stands near the member who is speaking. As each speech is typed it goes to the reporters' clerk, who sits at a desk below the Speaker's. A member may pick up a copy of the speech there or send for it, and revise it. As no carbon is made, it must get to the Government Printing Office to appear in that day's Record. If the printers don't get it by midnight, they insert a note: "Mr. Blank addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Appendix."

Very rarely is any copy lost, but sometimes it stays permanently on a congressman's desk. When John N. Garner of Texas and Claude Kitchin of North Carolina were in the House, they were famous for holding out their tariff speeches beyond the limit of thirty days so they were never printed at all. Representative Joe Fordney once remarked that he supposed their wives hadn't got around to editing them.

The shorthand experts for both houses have to see that parliamentary forms are followed in print. Members, for instance, mustn't use one another's names or use unmannerly words against a fellow member. Thomas Jefferson, whose famous Manual is still the basis of Congressional procedure, laid down that rule.

So, although a member may refer to "you so-and-so," it appears in the Record as "the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. Doe]," or "the senior senator" from some other state.

The shorthand experts don't record a thrown inkpot or exchanged blows. Last February they duly reported that Congressman Rankin said to the majority leader, John W. McCormack, "I will take on the gentleman from Massachusetts on this issue whenever he wants," and that McCormack retorted, "And I will answer to the gentleman from Mississippi any time." But there was no description such as the Washington's Post's, whose reporter pictured Rankin as moving in "for the famous bantamweight clutch he has used before" and the two men shaking their fingers at each other.

It's the long speeches, not the fights, that are hard on the shorthand men. The worst have been in the Senate, whose procedure permits filibusters. The record for the longest continuous speech is held by Senator Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana, who in 1938 carried on for twenty-five hours against the antilynching bill.

The shortest speech is not recorded, but more than thirty years ago a House member tried to make a "wordless speech." He merely held up a picture of a full dinner pail. Senator Smoot, then a valiant member of the Joint Committee on Printing, barred this from the Record.

Senator Smoot was vanquished, however, by Senator Benjamin Ryan Tillman's Allegorical Cow. This South Carolinian statesman visited New York in the '90s, cast his one eye over Wall Street, and wrote his comments for the New York World. Along with his comments appeared a cartoon of his own design, showing an allegorical cow feeding on the produce of the western and southern farmers, and being milked in Wall Street. This was accompanied by a second cow cartoon, showing the animal reversed but the farmers balked in milking her by the Supreme Court. Eighteen years later, in 1913, Senator Tillman succeeded in getting his cow cartoons into the Record.

Present rules, however, bar maps, diagrams, or illustrations unless approved by the Joint Committee on Printing. And the committee doesn't like pictures.

GETTING copy to the Government Printing Office for insertion in the Record is a job entrusted to special messengers, who are acquainted with the legislators' home addresses, favorite cocktail bars, clubs, and unlisted telephone numbers. They frequently break in on dinners, meetings, and night-club parties. John Sigurdsen, a House messenger, once followed his man home, then to a downtown hotel, and finally to an airport, where he coaxed the speech out of the congressman's pocket as the plane was warming up. Placidino Zagami recently got his man and his manuscript in the steam room of the Senate Office Building baths.

In a single evening there may be as many as sixty "outs," *i.e.*, places left for material yet to come. By an elaborate system of numbering, the official shorthand reporters, messengers, and printers fit the mosaic together and there is seldom a slip.

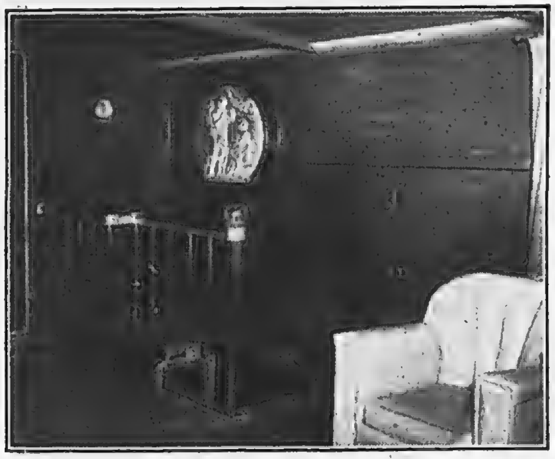
Congressmen's copy reaches the printer in all shapes. Sometimes it's a quotation from a valuable book that must be photostated before it's set. It may be a page from a newspaper with an item circled, or a handwritten letter or speech. Once a Pennsylvania senator sent in something in Welsh.

If the Record has no editor to cope with all this, it at least has a publisher—the Hon. Augustus E. Giegengack, who as public printer presides over 8,000 employees at the GPO. Giegengack is large, affable, bald, disarming, and, if need be, profane. Occasionally a congressman telephones him and demands that the man who made an embarrassing error be fired. "All right," says Giegengack, knowing that things don't move that fast in government anyhow. Later the congressman calls up to say he's reconsidered. "All right," says Giegengack, "we *won't* fire him."

Sometimes an indignant legislator threatens to fire Giegengack himself. The public printer, relying on the

(*Continued on page 56*)

"There isn't a lamp shade in town! But I found the cutest hat!" LIBERTY



The custom yacht interiors shown in the photographs are typical of Defoe's fine workmanship. For more than forty years, Defoe's rule has been that everything must be made to look well, to perform perfectly and to give the buyer top value for his money.

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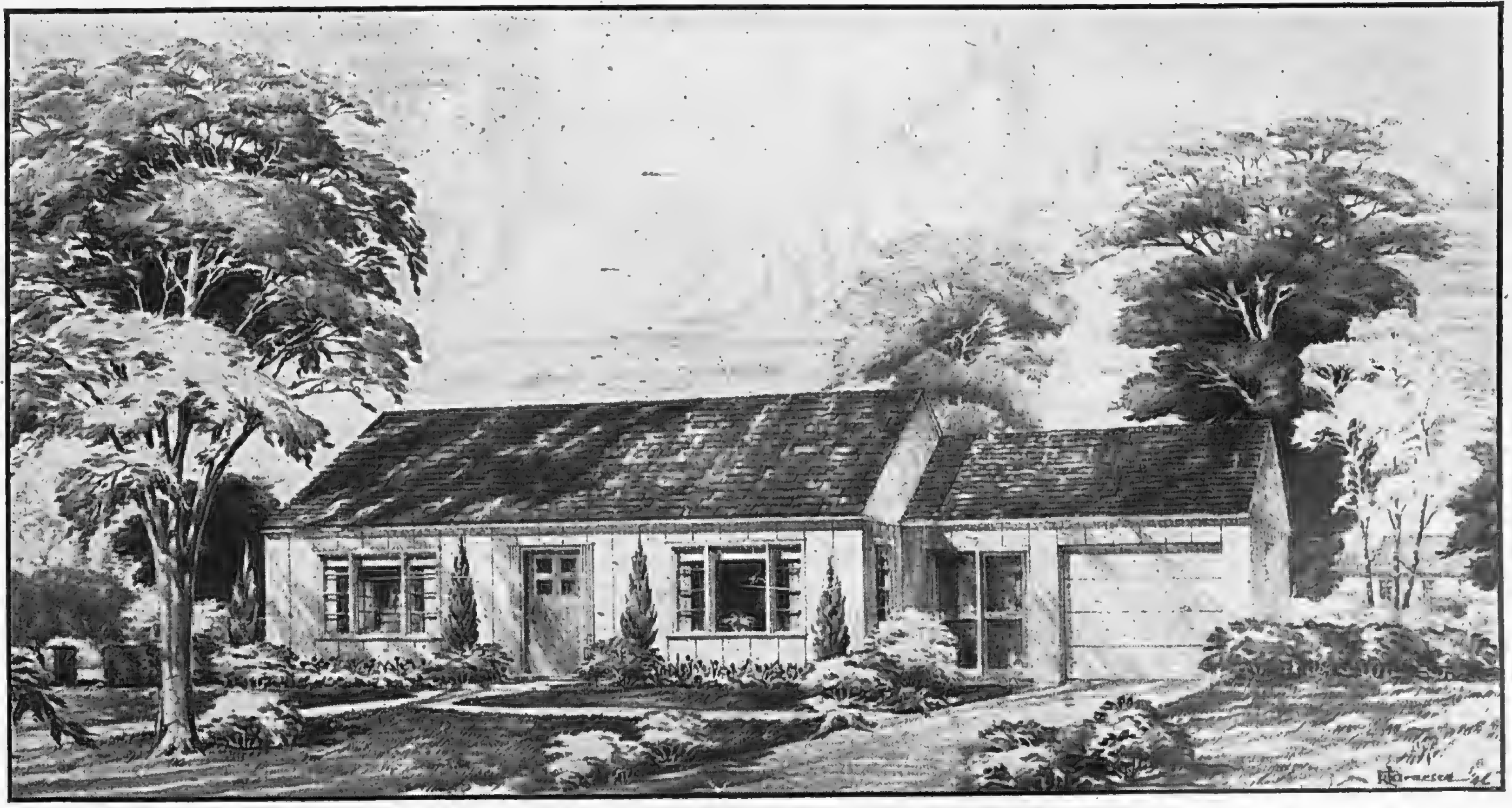

WHEN you buy Defoe you will acquire a fine heritage of beauty and common sense in design brought into being by workmen skilled in a traditionally fine craft. And remember, Defoe builds homes — the kind that fit naturally into any American couple's scheme of living. No trend toward freak design has been permitted and there will be no compromise materials or construction methods employed.

HOUSING DIVISION
DEFOE SHIPBUILDING COMPANY Dept. L-7
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN

Please send me the descriptive brochure on the new Defoe Homes. Enclosed is 10c for handling and mailing costs.

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*Street*________________________________

*City and State*__________________________

Defoe
HOMES

The Federal Government has just announced details of a nation-wide emergency housing program which will necessitate changes in the original program for the construction of Defoe Homes. The brochure offered in the attached coupon shows architect's drawings of several houses which can be built by the Defoe system. It also explains how the Defoe method works and pictures some of the unique features which Defoe will offer.

Thanks for the Memory

HARRY HOUDINI was the greatest magician and escape artist of them all. He specialized in giving demonstrations of his ability to get out of so-called "escape-proof" prisons.

At the age of twelve he read a book on magic and from it carved a thrilling and lucrative career. Starting as a trapeze artist, he gradually learned to free himself from such devices as manacles and strait jackets.

His most breath-taking stunt was to have himself bound hand and foot and then locked in a packing case. The case was bound with steel tape and dropped into the water off the Battery in New York. In fifty-nine seconds Houdini reappeared on the surface. But the mental and physical strain of his work caused his death at fifty-three.

Three things made Harry Houdini a wizard—a natural power to dislocate his joints, the genius to invent new stunts, and the courage to try the impossible.—*Allan H. Witwer.*

(*Continued from page 54*)

confidence of his board of directors —the Joint Committee on Printing, headed by Senator Carl Hayden— and of the President, tells him to go ahead. Nothing happens.

The Hon. Mr. Giegengack (Gus to his intimates) is used to rough-and-tumble. In 1918 he had charge of the 200 printers in Paris who got out the Stars and Stripes, World War I version. When he came to Washington in 1934, he found the Record with two wide, dull columns and nothing on its front page to show what country published it. He induced the Joint Committee to add the Great Seal and "United States of America." In 1941 the columns were reduced in width and set three to the page. This and minor changes saved $150,000 a year.

AT Giegengack's behest both houses now require that any member wanting to insert more than two pages in the Appendix must present an estimate of cost from the public printer. He remembers that the elder Senator La Follette once dropped into a public printer's lap 350 pages of material on railroad rates.

Since nobody knows how long the Record of a given day will be—anywhere from 2 to 300 pages—it is fortunate that Giegengack can take men off other government work and throw as many as 400 onto it on a "big night." The Record hasn't missed its 8 A.M. deadline at the post office and Capitol for years.

The public printer hasn't by any means finished with the type when the daily Record is out. It is used for countless reprints ordered by senators and representatives to be franked under their names to voters, and then it's held for the permanent bound Record, published and indexed separately for each session of each Congress.

Reprints are made in various shapes and sizes, from 1 to 64 pages, and are ordered in quantities from 500 to 400,000. The plates are held for reorders, as some numbers are popular. Prices vary with the size and quantity, but a congressman can buy 1,000 copies of a four-page piece, 5⅞ by 9⅛ inches, for less than ten dollars. This includes everything except the typesetting of the text. On the first page he can then insert: "Not Printed at Government Expense."

The Record proper has a daily circulation of 42,500 copies. Senators are allowed 100 subscriptions each, representatives 68, and various officials smaller quantities. These free subscriptions go mostly to friends of the members, newspapers, colleges, libraries, churches, political clubs, civic organizations, labor unions, veterans' posts, and men still in the service. There are about 1,500 paid subscriptions at $1.50 a month, and individual copies can be bought from the Superintendent of Documents at prices depending on the size, usually from three cents to twenty.

The cost of the Record, like the cost of almost everything else, has gone up since Pearl Harbor. Including the bound issues, it runs now about $60 a page, an increase of about 19 per cent from the $50.31 average for 1941. The last Congress (two years) spent $1,679,000 on the Record. In the first session of this Congress an average issue cost $3,400, and for the usual week of five days the figure was $17,045. The Appendix is about a third in size and about a third in cost.

In its sober type style, however, today's Record does not differ greatly from its earliest predecessor, the unofficial Annals of Congress (1789 to 1824). The succeeding Register of Debates and Congressional Globe carried on the tradition. Bold type, italics, and all-capital words are banned from speeches.

The debates themselves have changed with the frock coat and the flowing tie. But the range of Congressional topics remains as wide today as ever.

At one time or another every subject under the sun has been discussed in the Record. It is a rich storehouse of American folklore, brought from the farthest corners of our country to the national crossroads on Capitol Hill. There, spread before us, are all our virtues and all our faults.

Some years ago a patient student found in two decades of the Record 2,800 poetry quotations, the favorites being Shakespeare, Tennyson, Longfellow, Bryant, Gray, Whittier, and Pope, in that order. The most frequent quotation was Mark Antony's tribute to Brutus, ending "And say to all the world, 'This was a man!' "

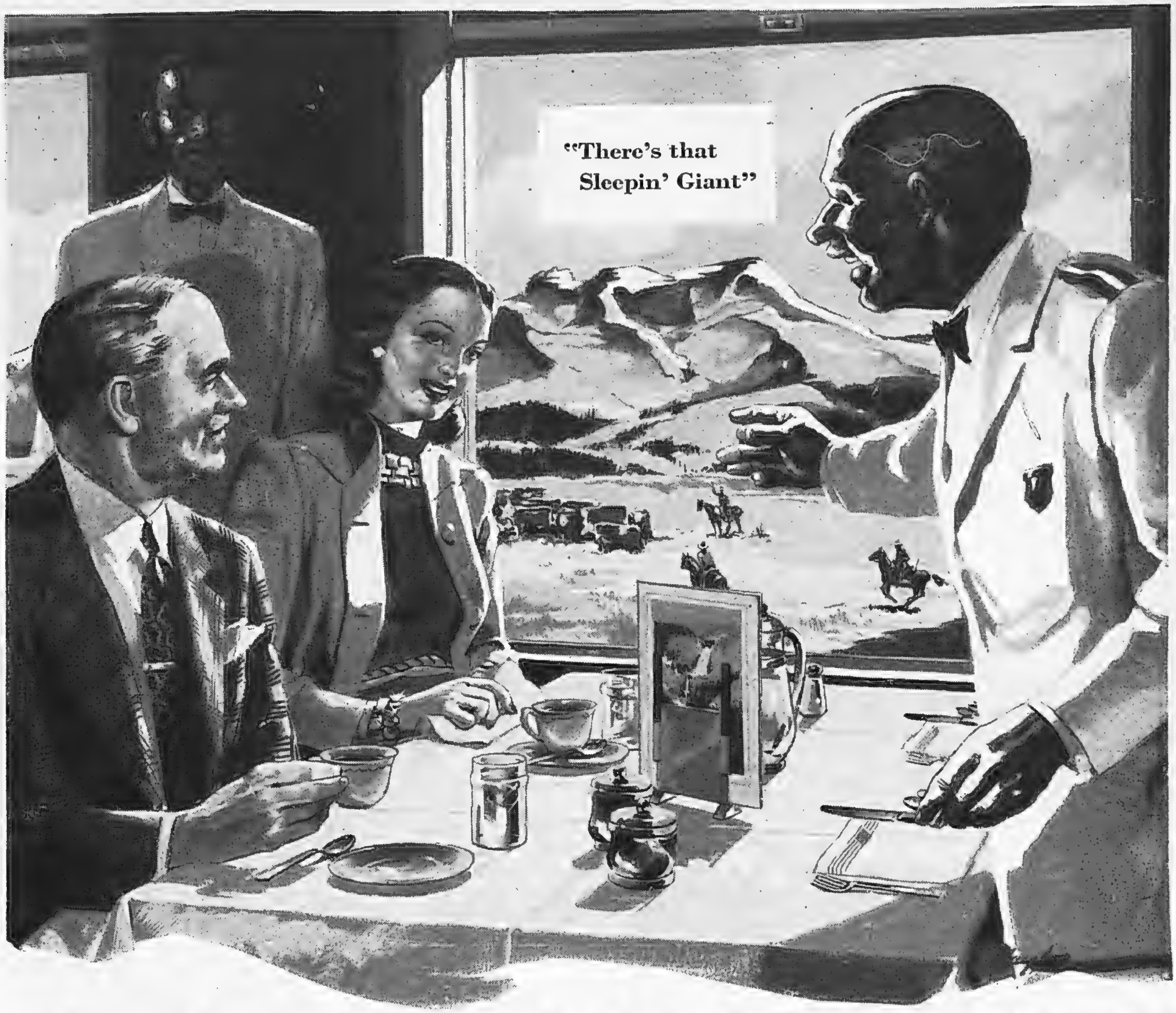
PROBABLY the Record's longest poem was composed in 1880 by the late Stephen W. Downey, delegate from Wyoming and father of the present Senator Sheridan Downey of California. Entitled The Immortals and dedicated to Congress, it started on Mount Olympus and moved on to Jerusalem, occupying fifteen pages of the Record. Its 18,000 words were in support of a bill to spend $500,000 to decorate the walls of the Capitol with religious paintings. Congress was unmoved.

A frequently quoted modern is Horace C. Carlisle, an employee of the Capitol architect's office and formerly its chief messenger. Poet Carlisle has had 137 pieces in the Record over thirty years. Twice a resolution has been introduced to designate him officially as poet laureate of Congress, with the privilege of having his poems in the Record. Both times it died in the Library Committee.

The unofficial poet laureate composes verse on short notice to mark public occasions or memorialize congressmen. The memorial verses are usually acrostics spelling out the man's name. Carlisle has a dozen long unpublished manuscripts with such titles as The Afterglow of the Overflow. One, called Declining Age's Final Pages, has a foreword by Vice-President Truman, who gave it to Carlisle a few hours before being sworn in as President.

There's no question about how Congress feels about the Record. It obviously likes what it gets. But what do we taxpayers get? An accurate account of Congress in action, for one thing. Even Congressional motives appear between the lines. Further, we get a broad picture of our country and our times—and a lot of amusement.

THE END



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A WAITER who enjoys getting your favorite dishes just right, and also takes time to point out the "Sleeping Giant" . . . a friendly porter who is actively interested in your comfort . . . a conductor who shares the lore of thirty years on the line—these typify the spirit and service that contribute to your contentment on Milwaukee Road trains.

If you enjoy beautiful scenery, why you're headed right into it on Milwaukee routes west and northwest. You see—from ground level—woodland lakes and mountain streams, great cities and cattle towns. The miles you travel are a running story of America.

A ticket on one of the big orange colored trains of the Milwaukee is a guarantee of happy traveling. See your nearest Milwaukee Road ticket agent today about that vacation trip west, or write to F. N. Hicks, Passenger Traffic Manager, 710 Union Station, Chicago 6, Ill.

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Coming!
NEW SPEEDLINERS
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ROAD BLOCKS

Continued from Page 22

he would park in front of a driveway. Neither will he park near the crest of a hill, so you must pull dangerously out of line to get by him. In fact, he won't park on a hill at all if he can avoid it; but if he must, he will leave his car in gear—in low if headed uphill, in reverse if headed down—and he'll cramp his front wheels in toward the curb as additional assurance his car won't start to roll. Because he knows from experience that one stopped car knocks out a whole traffic lane and effectively disrupts several others, this Good Driver whose name should be Legion, never jams up a busy city street by double parking; and on the open highway he pulls off the road when he wants to admire the scenery.

Having parked his car and set his hand brake, our Mr. Legion now either slides across the seat and emerges on the sidewalk, or looks carefully both ways before opening his left-hand door and stepping out. (Failure to take this precaution puts a driver in a class with the jaywalker who darts heedlessly out from between parked vehicles.) Mr. Legion makes equally sure nothing afoot or on wheels is approaching before he starts to maneuver his way out of a parking space or a driveway, and if Mrs. Legion is along he isn't too proud to ask her to help watch. Nevertheless, it's amazing how many ordinarily cautious drivers will pop out into traffic as unconcernedly as though approaching automobiles had kangaroo blood and could bound over any sudden obstruction.

IN our Continuing Study of the Really Accomplished Driver we've found that one of his characteristics is the way he sits behind the wheel as relaxed as a cowboy in the saddle, and *just as ready to snap into action.* Because he knows that in an emergency he will need both hands on the wheel, he keeps them there. And yet, on any road you can see automobilists (non-accomplished!) bowling along with their left arms dangling limply out the window or clutching the roof. This silly practice not only prevents a driver from acting efficiently in a crisis, but hopelessly confuses any one following him who can only assume the arm's owner is about to make some sort of signal.

Another holder of high rating as a Nuisance Value is the guy who keeps his hands glued to the wheel and his ideas a secret when he actually *is* fixing to stop or make a turn and should advertise the fact. Of course, if a car is equipped with a direction indicator, all it is necessary to do is use it in plenty of time to warn others of your intention to turn. But when you want to halt, even though your car has a stop light, you'll be doing those behind you a favor by thrusting out a warning arm, because your light is visible only to the driver directly behind you, while your hand can be seen for several cars back.

"Tell me—is there any money in refereeing?" LIBERTY

There are assorted systems of hand signals in use across the country, and some of them are a cinch for the uninitiated to misinterpret. However, we have found the following common-sense gestures to be easily understood anywhere by anyone.

To show you are going to stop: Extend your left arm straight out with the palm flat and facing the rear, and move your forearm to and fro as though pushing something back. To make a left turn: Edge over to the center of the road (or to the left-hand curb on a one-way street), stick out your arm and point to the left with your index finger, shaking your hand up and down in the natural direction-showing gesture. For a right turn: Get close to the right side of the road and move your extended arm in a clockwise rotating motion as though waving those behind to come on and pass.

THESE signals may not be strictly according to Hoyle in all states, but because they are part of a universal sign language, the folks following you cannot help but get the point, and you will get no bumper-thumping surprises.

All skillful operators "drive ahead." That is, their thinking is adjusted so they know well in advance exactly what they are going to do, and they do their best to figure out what others are likely to do, too, and make allowances for same. This involves keeping an eye on the rear-view mirror, for in automobile driving hindsight is often as valuable as foresight. Despite this fact, tourists often load up the back of their cars so the rear window is completely blacked out—a strictly illegal action in most states, and one which makes it utterly impossible for the driver to include in his calculations anything following him. He expects *you* to make up for this deliberate handicapping of his vision, while he blandly ignores your existence—until you have the bad fortune to nick him. Then hark while he demands why you don't look where you're going!

Out of the same bottom drawer come the Zombies of the Superhighway. These are the dreamers who insist on driving in the left-hand lane even though they are resolved to go much more slowly than the main flow of traffic. It would seem reasonable that a person who wants to mosey along at twenty miles an hour would voluntarily stay off express highways or would at least do his creeping along the right-hand side of the road so as to make it as painless as possible for those wishing to proceed at the accepted speed to get past him. But sleepwalkers aren't reasonable. Moreover, they resent interference, as evidenced by the way they ignore the pleading horns of the frustrated folks whose progress they relentlessly impede. In the opinion of many professional drivers, these slow-motion addicts are not only the most discourteous but also the most dangerous operators on the road, for they goad others into attempting to pass them on the right, which is conduct unbecoming a law-abiding citizen and a nerve-racking piece of business to boot. You can never be sure one of these slumberers won't suddenly wake up and move over just as you are yielding to temptation, and the onus for any resultant damage would, of course, be immediately placed upon you.

ALMOST as exasperating as the dawdler is the broken-field runner who cuts in and out of line, feverishly trying to take advantage of every yard of empty space ahead of him, a look of smirking triumph on his face as he forces brakes to scream and bumpers to clang so that he can pass one more car. All experienced operators know this aggravating habit nets its exhibitor practically nothing in time, but earns him the wholehearted hatred of everyone else on the road.

Even in the great open spaces there is a time to pass and a time to stay in line. Those lines on the road are there to indicate which time is which, but some drivers will bound unhesitatingly across a solid line, regardless of the fact that it is painted solid because there is danger in crossing it. Other casual souls disregard the broken lines as completely as though they were put there just to make the road look pretty, instead of to warn drivers to pass only with the utmost caution and not even then unless there is more than ample time to get back into the right-hand lane before meeting another car.

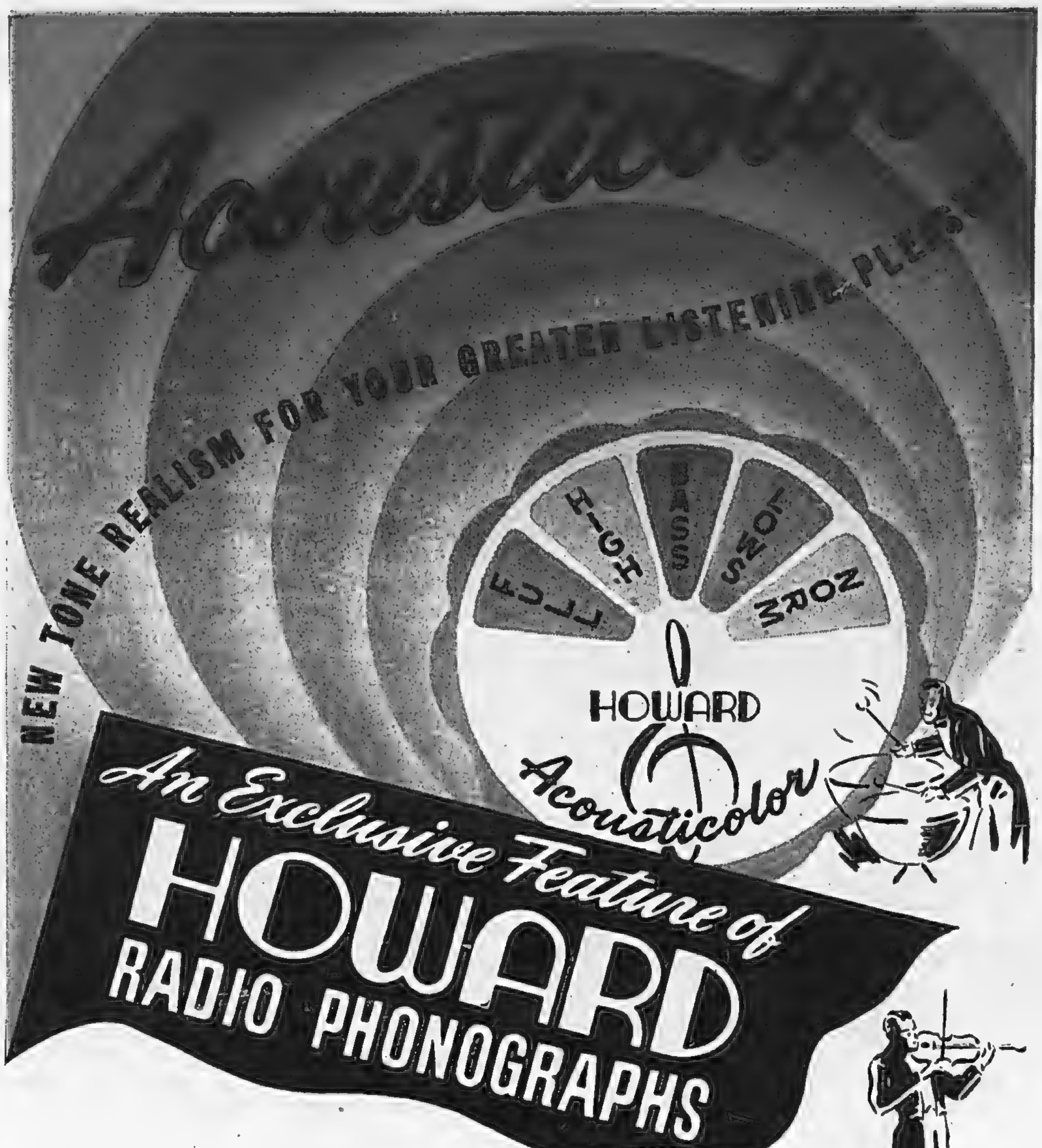
When a good driver like our hero,

Mr. Legion, wants to pass, he waits for a safe opportunity, signals his intention with a couple of polite toots—never with a long, irritating blast—and then wastes no time in putting his well-tooted plan into operation. With a burst of accurately controlled speed he overtakes the car ahead by a generous margin before cutting back in, then keeps on going at a rate which enables him to stay comfortably ahead. On the other hand, when some one wants to pass *him,* he not only draws well over to the right; he also considerately slows down a bit to make it easier for the other fellow to complete the move. As Mr. Legion's exact opposite we give you the chaps who treat an attempt to pass like an invitation to race. As soon as another car draws abreast of them they step down hard on the gas and fight to hold the lead until their opponent is obliged to duck back behind them. Whereupon they contentedly resume their former leisurely pace.

Just as bad is Harry Hotspur, who takes the bit in his teeth and decides to pass *here and now,* whether or not he crowds another car off the road. Perhaps such show-offs really don't understand that a car whose outside wheels are forced onto soft shoulders is quite likely to tip over, even though no actual collision occurs. But they certainly don't object to scaring their fellow motorists.

EVER since the original squeeze bulb let out its first plaintive beep there has been a tendency on the part of some operators to use the horn instead of the brake, causing them to career along making as much noise as though it were New Year's Eve. In many cities there is a law against this ill-mannered behavior. But there is at least one place where a decorous silence is something you can get along better without—namely, on narrow, winding country roads, particularly mountainous ones. It's this way: The natives who use such roads are convinced that *no* one at *any* time is *ever* going to come round the mountain in their direction. Hence they hug the embankment on every curve, regardless of whether that puts them on the right or the left. And your best protection against a too-abrupt encounter with a little old man in an aged jaloppy is a vigorous blowing of your horn before you round any and all blind curves—no matter how much you may hate to shatter the majestic mountain silences.

Another road hazard requiring special tactics to overcome concerns the apparently uncharted course often pursued by cars traveling west in the late afternoon or east in the early morning. The explanation of their erratic wavering is that they are heading directly into the sun and their drivers are more or less blinded by it. These bedazzled folks need as much room as possible in which to pass you, and it's wise as well as kind to give it to them. But when



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you have the sun in *your* eyes, you'd better cling to the right side of the road, for there is always the possibility that others won't make similar allowance for your disadvantage.

Almost as bad as driving into the sun is meeting a car at night with glaring headlights which don't get dimmed no matter how imploringly you blink yours. The only way to avoid being temporarily blinded is to get well over on your side and fix your eyes on the right-hand edge of the road. But go ahead and yell "LIGHTS!" as Luminous Lucifer swooshes past. Maybe it will startle him into showing more consideration.

Night driving would also be pleasanter if all cars with only one working headlight were locked into the garage at dusk. These Deadeye Dicks look exactly like motorcycles, and even though we have learned to assume that after dark there *are no motorcycles,* we still wish people wouldn't go in for this perilous form of masquerade. Carrying a few extra fuses and lamps makes it easy to cope with a sudden failure of one's lighting system, and Mr. Legion always does so, just as he has his headlights checked periodically to make sure they are properly focused.

THERE is a gentleman's agreement among truck and bus drivers that makes it easy for them to pass each other at night on unlighted roads, and they will gladly let you share in it. Instead of blowing the horn, they pull out toward the left and blink their lights a few times in quick succession. The driver ahead then moves over *as soon as he sees it is safe to pass him.* If you try this system and don't get an immediate response, it probably means you should hold your horses because there is some danger ahead which the trucker can see but you can't. When the track is clear he'll get out of your way, and as you go by give him a couple of short "Thank you" honks to show your appreciation.

Truck drivers are usually the first to stop and offer assistance to stalled motorists, although it beats them why so many drivers fail to equip themselves with the simplest tools for tire changing and making minor repairs. On two especially memorable occasions these knights of the road have come to our rescue. Once, when our horn got stuck and was blowing its head off while we desperately but futilely struggled to silence it by disconnecting every wire in sight, a trucker came along and gave the relay box under the hood a gentle tap with a small wrench, quelling the racket instantly.

Another time, a trucker flagged us, then sprang from his cab clutching a fire extinguisher and dashed over. He had seen a lighted cigarette tossed from a passing car land in our back seat, and he had sprung into action like a one-man fire department. Thanks to him, the damage was negligible, but this haphazard heaving of potential torches from automobiles can be the cause of highway accidents as well as forest fires.

Naturally you cannot expect every one on the open road to stop and help you whenever you get into difficulty—although it's wonderful how often folks will do exactly that. We've been pulled out of the mud in Virginia, pushed five miles in subzero weather when our feed line froze in Massachusetts, and been given a big jug of water when our radiator boiled dry near Death Valley. And we've tried to repay these kindnesses by extending a helping hand to others in trouble. However, there are times when one doesn't feel it would be wise to stop, and in such cases the thing to do is report the situation to a State Trooper or the police in the next town, and they will carry on from there.

INSOFAR as we have been able to find out, there is no law against driving a car whose exhaust pipe belches forth great clouds of smoke, but it's definitely no fun to drive behind such a fumarole. Its owner will be well repaid in cash as well as popularity for correcting the condition, because such a car wastes both gasoline and oil.

Fortunately in many states there are laws controlling a lot of the other thoughtlessly inconsiderate things some operators do. For example, one isn't supposed to make a moving van out of an automobile by lashing protruding articles such as baby carriages, bedsprings, ladders, and canoes on the outside so they extend beyond the dimensions of the car.

No first-rate driver need know about such laws, for it would never occur to him to do the things they prohibit. But when it comes to local traffic ordinances, there are so many, and they vary so from one community to another, that even the most well-intentioned person may unwittingly do something which is "agin the law in these here parts." Nevertheless, provided whatever he does is *entirely safe under existing conditions and involves no inconvenience or danger to others,* he will seldom find himself in for anything worse than a lecture by the town constable on how to behave in the future. So even though you are convinced that the car on the right has the right of way, don't insist on it if the other fellow shows signs of contesting the point. He is probably wrong. But *just possibly* in this instance he may have the law on his side.

In any case, let him go unscathed, for as the better driver, you can afford to extend the greater courtesy. And we can all of us hope that by showing our own willingness to do everything within reason to foster the safety and pleasure of others, we may set up a chain reaction which will eventually fire everyone else in this land of beckoning highways with the same amiable spirit.

THE END

HARRY LAMPERT

"—and he had a mustache like this."
LIBERTY

DUDE RANCHES

Continued from Page 17

vated a few stock phrases like "Keep the knees flexed" and "Hold the toes firmly in the stirrups." To the average tenderfoot, whose one concern is to stay on his beast at any cost, such advice would be double talk even if it wasn't given at a time when his attention is riveted, much more firmly than he is, on his horse.

GEORGE McCARTHY, proprietor of the diminutive MAC Ranch near Victorville in California, is both garrulous and articulate. His advice to the beginner is reassuring. To learn to ride, he says, just stay in the saddle in the most comfortable and natural way. Never mind about keeping the back straight, or leaning forward or sideways or any way, or putting the weight here or there or doing anything about the knees. Just sit on the horse and let nature take its course. Mac recommends that to prevent chafing, beginners wear glamor pants, which is dude-ranchese for long underdrawers. He insists they walk their horses an hour a day for the first three days for hardening. Even five minutes of trotting will make flabby muscles sore, he says.

On a dude ranch the male ego asserts itself in various peculiar ways. Even though he may never have ridden anything more spirited than a New Year's Eve lamppost, the average male demands of the corral boss "the best horse on the ranch" or "something with some get-up and go." Because dude-ranch operators live in mortal terror of guest accidents and possible subsequent lawsuits, their temptation to answer such a request with a horse that will spook at every clump of sagebrush is reluctantly dismissed. Instead, the guest is given a plug which is about ten degrees safer than might be assigned to his timid wife. Secure in the belief that he is mounted on a charger which is amenable only because of his superior control, he trots off in a happy dream of riding hell-for-leather through Dodge City in the days of Bat Masterson or William S. Hart.

Ranch owners report that a husband who is a Caspar Milquetoast at home often becomes master of all he surveys when for the first time he gets on the range. He feels it is his duty to instruct his wife in the technique of Western riding, his expert knowledge having been gathered from watching Wallace Beery once at a movie.

One of his tricks is practically universal. While his wife is still marveling at her ability to stay on her horse at the furious pace of a dead walk, her husband will try to taunt her into a gallop or at least a jog trot. When, with admirable good sense, she steadfastly refuses to encourage her horse to move even a midgin faster, he will drop back behind her. Then, with a surreptitious slap of his reins or a kick in the rump, he will prod her drowsing, contented animal into sudden wakefulness.

THE response is invariably immediate and frequently disastrous. The startled animal bolts, leaving the wife behind. The husband covers up his guilt with solicitude for the little woman and a bawling-out for the rancher for assigning his wife a mean, untrustworthy horse. And his wife, confidence shaken, spends the next couple of weeks trying to get back her courage. By insisting that new guests ride only when accompanied by a cowboy, most of the large outfits effectively curb such manifestations of manliness.

But whatever trouble the men cause, there's a general belief they can't hold a candle to the ladies. Although few of their guests are now unattended women, dude ranchers agree that these cause ninety per cent of their problems. One rancher explains it this way: "Take women who still think themselves young, put them on a ranch where they get lots of good food, exercise, plenty of clean fresh air and steady restful sleep, and the only thing that happens to them is they get healthy. And when they get healthy you get romance."

In the close society of a ranch, a ripening romance is about as secret as a circus side show. Rey Hickey, who combines his nominal duties as chief of police of Sesabe, Arizona, with his commercial interest as proprietor of a saloon, can always tell when spring is stirring within the cowboy breast.

"When a hand who rolls his own asks for tailor-made cigarettes," says Rey, "or when a boy who drinks

The foods I like
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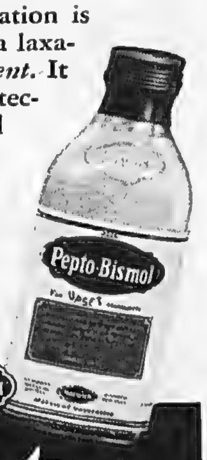

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only whisky comes in for a bottle of imported sherry, then I know something's ripening on a ranch hereabouts."

To most Johnny-come-lately dude-ranch owners, the beginnings of their interesting business seem obscure. But Walter Nye, who operates in Billings, Montana, an excellent association representing some of the oldest and largest dude ranches in the country, says unequivocally that the famed Eaton Ranch in Medora, North Dakota, was the first, going in for dudes around 1880. Here Theodore Roosevelt spent his dude days and the ranch still has the guest book bearing his signature, placed there in 1883.

In those days Easterners went West for adventure, vacations, or, like Teddy Roosevelt, for health, and paid a ranch for their keep. They returned to give glowing accounts of the life, and inevitably others followed them. Dudes were interesting and ranchers generally liked them. Also their fees were highly acceptable legal tender for ranch repairs, stock improvement, and cow-hand payroll. It wasn't until the 1920s, though, that dude ranching really took hold. It spread like range fire down through Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and up into Idaho, and expanded mightily in Montana and Wyoming. California got its first dude ranch in 1924.

But the expansion of the '20s was nothing compared to what's happened since. Today in some places guest ranches are almost as common as filling stations. One small California town has fifteen. They abound in Florida, Kansas, Alabama, Illinois, Virginia, New York, New Jersey—everywhere people go for vacations. Scores of senile Kiss-a-me-me Lodges have been reconverted into virile yippee-ki-ye H Bar H Ranches by the simple act of repainting a sign.

THE reconversion pays dividends. An Eastern ranch operator who a couple of years ago was doing business at the same stand as an innkeeper, estimates that eighty per cent of his guests are attracted because they think he runs a ranch instead of an inn. "Of course every vacation spot is filled this year," he said. "But," he added softly, "if you get twenty-five per cent higher rates because you are a ranch instead of an inn, who am I to say the public is crazy?"

Some who have gone into the business have lost their shirts (it takes about five years to become established as a dude ranch), but in general it is pretty profitable. Many cattle ranches were saved from going under during the last depression by dude income, and today most of these outfits get about half of their total revenue from guests.

Although the recent boom has made dude ranching an especially attractive business proposition, getting started in anything more than a tourist camp presents some complications. There are plenty of ranches for sale, for example, but the war rich have found in them, among other things, an enjoyable and practically legal means of beating the government out of income taxes. They have, therefore, bid up prices to three or more times their value. There is not a cattle ranch in the country that can be bought at today's market and operated at such a profit. Only the most clever promotion and astute management could make one pay out as a guest ranch.

Almost any amount of capital may be spent to start. The movie cowboy Roy Rogers is building a dude ranch near colorful wide-open Las Vegas, Nevada, in which he expects to invest $75,000. A ranch now widely known started without electric lights, running water, or private baths, and with only two horses. As one old dude wrangler put it. "You can start with one bridle, one blanket, one saddle, one horse, and one dude. In a pinch you can do without the dude. But by gawd you better have the horse!"

FINDING a good dude ranch on which to spend a vacation isn't difficult. The Northern ranches in Wyoming-Montana-Colorado-Idaho area operate from June through September. The Southwestern outfits of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and California often are open from October to May, but there are many year-round and summer places there too. Most of the Western railroads have lists of ranches, and state and local chambers of commerce, tourists bureaus and auto clubs can usually supply them.

The hitch comes in making a reservation. Many ranches require and carefully investigate references and they are often solidly booked weeks in advance.

But 100,000 dudes shout happily that it's worth any trouble it takes. Even if you've never yet touched a horse, you can have fun. Half the guests at ranches in the Adirondacks and Poconos haven't ridden before. They learn in a week.

If you're inexperienced, just don't be like the woman who, with a group of dudes, saw cowhands shoot blackleg vaccine into a bunch of calves and then brand them. That night at supper she described her reaction:

"You know, at first I thought branding those poor little calves with that hot iron was so cruel I was going to report it to the S.P.C.A. But then I saw the syringe and I knew it was all right."

There was a moment of startled silence around the table. But the lady went right on.

"I think it's so sweet of them," she purred, "the way the cowboys ease the pain of that branding with a hypodermic."

THE END

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

Teacher Irene Dunne finds potentate Rex Harrison her toughest pupil.

ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM

(Twentieth Century-Fox)
Irene Dunne, Rex Harrison, Linda Darnell

THE king's English—the King of Siam's, that is—wasn't so good, most of the ladies in his harem were no ladies, and his sixty-seven children were Oriental Dead End kids. All in all, they added up to quite a white man's burden for Anna Owens, an English widow who in 1862 was hired to teach the royal household its A B Cs.

Based on Margaret Landon's popular true story, this movie puts Irene Dunne (Anna) in hoop skirts, and talented British actor Rex Harrison (King Mongkut) in his first American film.

As the proud Britisher who refuses to get housemaid's knee by groveling before the king *à la* local custom, Anna's main project is to liberalize her moody boss. She has to move fast to keep up with the potentate's split personality. Sometimes he relishes human barbecues (burning two-timing haremite Linda Darnell at the stake), and then again he makes such naïve gestures as writing Abraham Lincoln and offering to send elephants to help out the Union Army.

Anna perseveres and refines the king so that at a state banquet he runs around passing out napkins—after the meal is over. Her best pupil, however, is the crown prince. She converts him into a Siamese Tom Paine and finally sees him rid the country of most of its barbarism.

Along with its assortment of exotic dancing girls and expensive pagodas and palaces (sets cost $300,000), the movie needed so many extras that Los Angeles' Chinatown was virtually depleted.

O.S.S.

(Paramount)
Alan Ladd, Geraldine Fitzgerald

THERE'S been a Hollywood cloak-and-dagger Derby ever since the Office of Strategic Services unlocked its files. Paramount, with O.S.S., nosed out several other studios which were whipping together authentic American spy stories.

The movie offers a quick tour of an Army espionage school and then focuses on one undercover group that includes woman-hater Alan Ladd and Geraldine Fitzgerald.

After parachuting into Nazi-occupied France, the team remembers its invaluable sabotage lessons, eliminates a bunch of Germans while Ladd becomes reverent toward modern Mata Haris.

Thirty real-life O.S.S. heroes were technical advisers on such Flash Gordon touches as a tobacco pipe that's a gun and modeling clay that explodes. Best O.S.S. secret weapon: a Gestapo agent who sells out for cash (U. S. currency).

Alan Ladd takes a rare beating.

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

NIGHT IN PARADISE (Universal). Walter Wanger's gaudy fable in Technicolor, starring Merle Oberon as Queen of Persia and Turhan Bey as Aesop.

CLUNY BROWN (20th Century-Fox). Jennifer Jones plumbs and also charms Charles Boyer in this delightful satire on English society.

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER'S
The LION'S ROAR

Published in this space every month

The greatest star of the screen!

Hello, again! I guess you've been seeing my face on movie screens quite often of late—and maybe you've noticed the extra r-r-r in my roar!

★ ★ ★ ★

There's a reason. In fact, there are several reasons. Just look at the M-G-M hits that are around. And the wonderful reception they're getting!

For instance, that wonderful motion picture "The Green Years". As you know, it was filmed from A. J. Cronin's latest romantic best-seller. And it has Charles Coburn, Tom Drake, Beverly Tyler, Hume Cronyn and a perfect cast. It has broken records at Radio City Music Hall and most everywhere else.

★ ★ ★ ★

And there's "Easy To Wed" which is gay and melodic and in gorgeous Technicolor. Van Johnson is *easy* to go for. Esther Williams is *easy* to fall for. Lucille Ball is *easy* to look at. And Keenan Wynn is *easy* to laugh at. Yes, "Easy To Wed" is *easy* to take!

★ ★ ★ ★

Then there's "Courage of Lassie" which is also in Technicolor. Lassie meets new adventures and new friends—Elizabeth Taylor (the "National Velvet" girl) and that ever-more-popular Tom Drake. You'll love them all.

★ ★ ★ ★

So, you see, it looks like an exciting summertime of entertainment—a gala season that will be lighter and brighter because of hits and hits and more hits.

★ ★ ★ ★

From
M-G-M,
of course!

—*Leo*

ARS GRATIA ARTIS

SHOES REPAIRED WHILE U WAIT
SALO

"If you had time to take them off I could do a better job!"

LIBERTY

JUNGLE PETE COMES HOME

Continued from Page 15

thought bitterly. He knew that she hadn't paid last week's bill. With a small thankful sigh she turned into her own tree-shadowed street. It was still hers. But it was like her—grown old and shabby. The real estaters had their eye on it. Tear down the ricketty clapboard houses. Put up smart apartments. Over my dead body, Miss Avrilla thought. And then another thought snapped at its heels. It was something that old fusscoat, Dr. Hamish, had said about her heart. It was of good stuff. But you couldn't expect even a Pettigrew heart to beat forever.

A GIRL sauntered under the trees just ahead of her. Miss Avrilla recognized the nonchalant gait, the odious slacks, the shock of comb-free red hair, the trail of cigarette smoke. Rose Maler was her neighbor and almost the last straw. A harum-scarum worthless creature who had been a Wac overseas and got herself into dreadful trouble with a soldier (some people even hinted at a Frenchman and a baby) and had been sent home to her parents in disgrace. It was no rumor that she spent most of her time at a roadhouse bar on the old Pike. Miss Avrilla tried to whisk unnoticed through Rose's faintly alcoholic aura, but the creature was in a friendly mood.

"Hello, auntie!" she said. "What gives?"

"Good afternoon!" Miss Avrilla countered chillingly.

"Ain't it just? Swell! The best possible afternoon in the best possible world. Always good for a good laugh. Or don't you think so?"

There was no doubt that she'd been drinking.

"I see nothing to laugh at at the moment," Miss Avrilla said.

"Well, possibly you're right. But if you don't laugh, what do you do?"

Miss Pettigrew made no effort to answer. She slid through her own gate into her small front yard. A fair-haired, white-faced young woman and a little black-haired, gray-eyed boy occupied her porch. The boy sat huddled on the top step, his arms clasped tight about his chest. The young woman asked eagerly, "You are Miss Pettigrew, aren't you?" as though it were her last hope. Miss Avrilla admitted to nothing. She had a notion that the unexpected pair had been there a long time, camped stubbornly on her doorstep.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" the young woman went on, as though Miss Pettigrew had said something warm and encouraging. "We've been waiting here. I'm Jenny Pritchard—Mrs. Peter Pritchard. This is Jamey. The stationmaster sent us. He said he was sure—maybe—that you had a room to rent."

Miss Avrilla stiffened.

"Mr. Rees ought to have had more sense," she said. "He knows, on account of the housing shortage"—not to mention the mortgage, which Miss Avrilla wouldn't have mentioned to save her life—"that I might agree to take in a respectable young married couple, but I won't have children—"

That ought to have settled the matter. But the pale, pretty face had frozen into a queer stubborn look.

"Jamey's not children," she said. "He's just one little boy—a good little boy, aren't you, Jamey?"

"No," Jamey said.

Miss Avrilla heard herself emit an unexpected rusty chuckle. "He certainly ought to know," she said.

At which moment whatever it was concealed in Jamey's tight embrace wriggled itself free. It was small and woolly, with possible poodle-Maltese-terrier-Pekingese connections and bright amber eyes.

"That's just Clara," young Mrs. Pritchard explained cheerfully, though with an undertone of panic. "She's Jamey's pet. She's such a sweet little dog."

"She bites," Jamey said.

"Only people she doesn't like. And she'd like Miss Pettigrew, wouldn't she?"

"Why?" Jamey asked.

"Because she's nice and kind. Because—" She didn't seem able to think of any more reasons. Miss Avrilla's key was turning in the lock. "Please—please listen. Peter—my husband—he's just home from the Pacific. He's coming in on the six-fifteen. We've got to have a home for him—at least somewhere just to be together. We haven't seen father for four years, have we, Jamey?"

She seemed to be appealing to the little boy for help. He scowled.

"I don't want to see him," he said. "I don't want a favver," and burst into a sudden storm of angry tears.

"He's so tired," his mother faltered, "so awfully tired. We both are. We've been looking all day. Everyone says the same thing—there's no room for us, or they won't take children, or little dogs. Oh, please—please—"

"I'm sorry—"

The young woman's eyes had caught fire.

"You're cruel—you're selfish! You're the kind that makes wars—"

MISS PETTIGREW shut the door on the desperate face. After a while she heard dragging, defeated footsteps creep down the porch steps. She was safe at last, and she went into the parlor to give the colonel a reassuring nod. No meddlesome brat would take his sword from its place under the portrait and tarnish its undimmed glory with sticky fingers. No mongrel cur by name of Clara would blast the hush of the guest room with irreverent yappings.

But then she sat down. She was tired too, and a little frightened. One day the invaders would come again and she wouldn't be able to keep them out.

The telephone rang shrilly. In the gathering dusk its voice had a venomous, derisive sound. Maybe it was the telephone man reminding her that next week she wouldn't have a telephone.

But it was only Mr. Rees's warm jovial voice.

"The six-fifteen is just signaled," he said. "My refugees are back in my waiting room, looking like the cat brought them in. Miss Avrilla, you're an old friend. I hate to tell you what I think of you—" He cleared his throat. "You're a damned mean-hearted old hellion," he said crisply, and then rang off.

THE first lights of the station flashed past. The man who had been called Jungle Pete wriggled himself into the secondhand overcoat. The doctor had to help him.

"I haven't shaken like a leaf for four years," he grinned—"not since I left 'em."

The next minute he had barged his way out onto the platform and stood there looking wildly about him. But he didn't see what he was looking for. He blundered through the milling crowd of new arrivals like a bull with its head down, and into the waiting room. He was sweating and panting as though he'd run a race and maybe had lost it. For the waiting room was empty. Or so, at first sight, he thought. Then he saw her. She sat huddled on a bench under a gaudy poster which welcomed returned heroes. Her hat was off and her fair head thrown back. She looked like someone drowned and left on the shore. But she was only fast asleep.

She was dreaming. She dreamed she was a little girl playing with her doll's house. And then someone she couldn't see gave the house a kick and it fell to pieces. Then she woke up. A strong hand on her shoulder was shaking her. A man's voice said, "Wake up, baby!" rather hoarsely, as though he had been crying too. She stood up with a little choking gasp and then she was in his arms. She didn't cling to him as she had done that dreadful day four years ago. She was too tired. But he held her away from him, looking down at her as though he knew at once that something was different. So she had to look at him too. And for a startled moment she thought they had both made a mistake. This was a stranger who held her. It was only slowly that the shy awkward boy who had said good-by to her on that other dreadful station came through, as it were—the hard-eyed, lean-jawed man whose fingers hurt her arms—like a faint, illusive memory.

"Gosh, honey, you scared me! I thought I'd lost you—"

"I'm sorry, Pete. I—I must have fallen asleep."

"Where's the kid? Where's Jamey?"

"He's asleep too—in the stationmaster's office. The stationmaster's been so kind, trying to help us. Pete, please, let's sit down for a moment. I'm so tired."

"Sure. But why don't we go home?"

She began to laugh. She managed to stop herself before the laugh got away from her. They sat down side by side under the poster.

'We haven't got a home, Pete. We haven't even a roof or a bed. I've tried and tried—everything, everywhere. But there aren't any homes—not for us. You see, it's just that people don't like children—"

"Is that so?" he said.

"Or—er—little dogs," she added.

"Have we got dogs too?" he asked.

"Just one—a very little one. People like dogs and kids in the movies. But not ours. I guess ours are different. There was a Miss Pettigrew on Elm Avenue. She had room for a young couple. But not for Clara and Jamey—"

"Is that so?" he said again.

"She didn't like them either."

"That's just too bad." He gave a short laugh. Not an amused laugh.

She went on faintly: "People back home said it would be like this. There isn't any place anywhere for—for us. But you telegraphed. You seemed to think it would be all right—"

"I did." His eyes met hers for an instant and slid away. "I guess I've got another thought coming to me." He stood up, bracing his shoulders as though under some familiar burden. "Come on, sweetheart. Let's pick up the kid and go blow Miss Pettigrew to hell."

"Please, please listen—" She was desperate. All the things she'd planned to explain quietly, reasonably, maybe by their own fireside, had to be said now in this bleak unfriendly place. "You've got to go easy with Jamey, Pete. You've been away such a long time. For him it seems forever. I—I've tried not to let him forget you—"

"He never knew me. There wasn't anything to remember." He was looking at her now steadily, appraisingly. "Maybe he doesn't want me back," he said.

"Of course—of course he does. Really. He and I have been together—everything to each other. It's silly, but he really thinks he takes care of me. I—I guess he's sort of jealous—"

"What are you—sort of?"

She bent her head.

"I'm just so very tired," she said.

He was silent. He was thinking as he had learned to think, fast and hard, not kidding himself. Then he stood up again.

"D'you think it would be all right if I just took a peek at him?" he asked.

"Of course. Don't be silly—I didn't mean—"

SHE was almost crying. He took her by the arm, and then, as though he'd remembered something, let her go and went ahead of her into the stationmaster's office. Mr. Rees, having done the honors for the six-fifteen, was just taking off his official coat. He jerked his thumb at the half-closed door behind him.

"He and the mutt are dead to the world," he whispered. He held out a big hand. "I guess you're the kid's dad. Welcome home, soldier."

Jungle Pete whispered back, "What home?" and Mr. Rees's face went a shade redder.

"Got me there, sir. It's a bad break. What are we to do? I'd take you home, but my kids got measles, and the wife—"

"—doesn't like dogs."

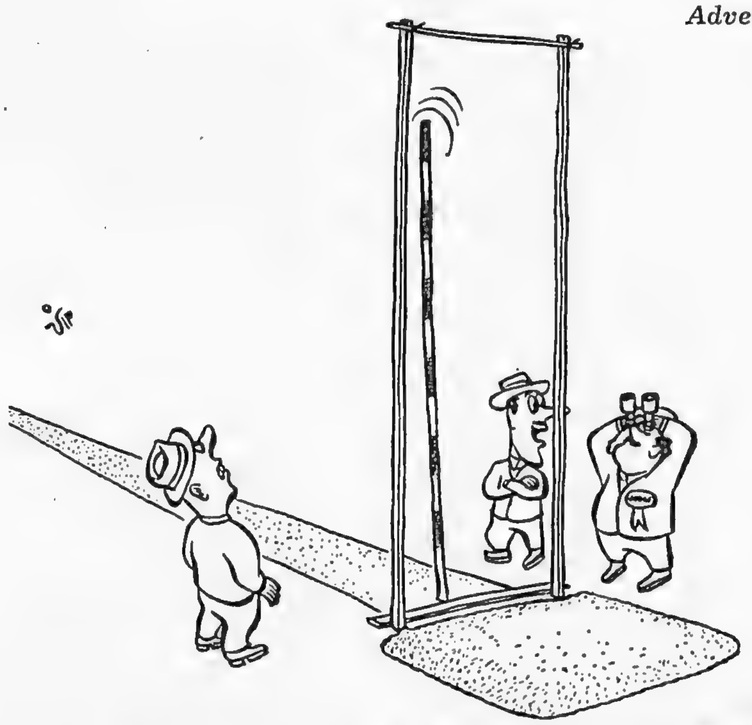
"Well, no—she don't. Women are queer cattle—if you'll pardon me, ma'am," to Jenny, "take our Avrilla Pettigrew now—"

"I'll get round to Avrilla presently."

The man who was called J. P. for short tiptoed across the office. He moved like a shadow as though he were creeping up on someone. When he came back again, a minute or two later, he was grinning, showing the white teeth.

"That little mutt sure loves him," he said. "She growled at me like a Bengal tiger." He went over to the

Advertisement



"He finished a double helping of Wheaties; then he took off, and that's the last I saw of him."

Even single helpings of Wheaties will help you get off to a good start. High-powered nourishment in that famous "Breakfast of Champions," Wheaties, with milk and fruit. And lots of delicious flavor. *The kind of flavor that's recruiting members for America's "Clean Plate Club."*

office table where Mr. Rees had tossed his coat and ran his hand over it like a man who is thinking hard of something else. "Well, that's the way it is," he said. "This is peace and we've damn well got to get used to it." He nodded at Mr. Rees and took Jenny by the arm, this time as though he meant it. "Let him stay a while longer, mister. If he wakes, tell him his dad missed the boat. He's still on the high seas." He walked Jenny out of the office, and there in the dim empty waiting room turned her about. She made herself look up at him. There was a queer look on his dark face.

"Now listen to what I tell you, honey. Nix on spending our first night on the sidewalks. I'll fix Miss Pettigrew. I've learned how to fix folk who hold out on me. Just you wait. And for the love of Mike don't shake all over. I'm not going to eat ya." He did laugh—a sort of hard, yet tolerant laugh. "Damn it, woman, I'm not even going to kiss you."

ROSE MALER leaned over the yard gate. She knew one thing: She couldn't spend another evening in that gloomy house, with her folks looking down their noses like she'd murdered someone. She hadn't. Quite the contrary, as you might say.

At least the fellow with the big shoulders was something new on Elm Street. He touched his hat to her, and under the lamplight she caught the gleam of strong white teeth.

"What gives, soldier?" she asked.

"How d'you know I was a soldier!" he asked back.

"Had one myself once. I know the line."

"Sure. Anyone name of Pettigrew live round here?"

She tossed her dark red curls at the unlit house next door.

"If you call it living."

"Thanks."

She called after him, "You'd have more fun taking me to the movies, bud," and she heard his laugh.

"Another time," he called back.

THE front-door bell had a shrill, harsh voice. Miss Avrilla limped out into the dark hallway and switched on a light, settled her spectacles on her sharp nose, and patted the little bun of gray hair on the top of her head to make sure it was in place. She might feel scared, but she wouldn't show it.

A man stood on the doorstep. She couldn't see his face under the aggressively cocked soft hat. A voice that was rough and yet somehow not unpleasant said, "Miss Pettigrew," not as a question but as a statement, and the man put her gently but decisively on one side and stepped into the hall and closed the door. He didn't ask leave and he didn't apologize. He took her by the arm and marched her into her own sitting room and switched on all the lights. Which was something she never did.

"Better sit down, ma'am. I've got a lot to say to you and not much time." He flicked back the lapel of his coat and she caught the metallic flash of a badge. "Ever heard of the F.B.I.?" he asked.

Miss Avrilla sat down. She had a clear conscience. At least, she thought she had. But with the police you could never be quite sure. And the F.B.I., of which Miss Avrilla had read frequently, was worse. They uncovered awful things about the best people.

The stranger stood with his back to the fireplace.

"Nice place you've got here, ma'am," he said. "Feels like a real home."

"It's been a home for a long time." Her voice sounded dry and cracked. "It was my great-grandfather's."

He glanced over his shoulder at the portrait.

"That fine old boy?"

"Colonel Amos Pettigrew," she said stiffly. "On General Washington's staff. He died here—of wounds."

"Is that so?" he said.

She hadn't meant to bring the colonel into this strange, alarming interview. The way he'd said, "That fine old boy?" pleased her. Though he seemed disrespectful, he knew where respect was due. She watched him as he took a little black book out of his pocket and flicked over the leaves as though to refresh his memory.

"A FEW hours ago," he said in a rather loud official voice, "a young woman with a child and a little dog called on you. She stated that her husband was returning from the war and had taken a job here, and she applied to you for house room. You object to dogs and children, so you refused. In a short time she will be back here. She will tell you that her husband, having presumably missed the boat, had failed to show up and that, having met me by chance in the stationmaster's office, I had told her that I'd persuade you to change your mind—"

"I don't change my mind. And as for you, young man, whoever you are—"

"I'll be your nephew," he announced coolly. "Pete Pettigrew, veteran. You call me J. P. for short."

"I do not."

"You will—if you know what's good for you." He had been pacing up and down in front of her with slow stealthy strides that made her think of a tiger she'd seen long ago in a circus cage. Now, abruptly, he stopped. "This is no joke, ma'am, I'm here to tell you. I represent Justice. If you're a right-minded citizen, you won't make trouble. If you aren't, it will be just too bad."

Miss Avrilla stammered in horrified bewilderment that she certainly was. At any rate, whatever else this alarming young man had on his mind, it was not the mortgage.

"I'll bet *he* didn't mind a bit of discomfort," her visitor went on, and jerked his head in the direction of Colonel Amos. "For the sake of a square deal all round, he'd have taken worse things than a kid and a mutt in his stride—"

"Listen—" Miss Avrilla began.

"You're doing the listening, ma'am. One of these days, maybe, you'll get the low-down. Right now, all you need to know is that I've been tailing these two for four years and now that I've caught up with them—"

She interrupted: "Gangsters!" and felt queer all over. So that was it. The young woman had looked hunted. It was natural for a child to behave like that. Not that any of it made sense.

The F.B.I. young man shook his head. "Don't jump to conclusions, ma'am. If that young woman had just pinched that youngster—why, I'd just pick her up right away. But it's not that simple. It's been a long chase and now it's up to me to find out what happened—who the hell done it, so to speak. And I'm not going to be sidetracked by any old fuss-budget who don't happen to like kids and mutts—"

"You're talking very impertinently, young man—"

"I'm talking turkey. When those two come back, you'll take 'em in, like a good Christian. You'll give 'em lodging for tonight and as long as need be. That's your job. You leave the rest to me."

"I won't be left alone—" Miss Avrilla protested waveringly.

"You won't be. I'll be right here. I'll bet you've got an attic and a spare mattress. I'm used to roughing it." The bell rang again, less firmly, as though it were frightened too. "That's them, I guess," he said. He gave her a sudden dark little grin, like an escaped imp. "Now, auntie, do your stuff," he said.

THIS, she thought, was how it must have felt to be in the hands of the Gestapo—helpless and almost witless. The F.B.I. man had her by the arm. He was actually steering her down her own hall to her own front door. He opened it for her with a politeness that did not deceive her. He could be dangerous. By comparison, the pale young woman and the little boy with the horrible little dog clasped in his arms seemed just helpless and witless too, and utterly forlorn. The young woman's eyes penetrated into the shadows of the hall with a look of frightened recognition. The young man whose arm was linked through Miss Avrilla's, seemed to scare everyone.

"I—I'm sorry—" Jenny Pritchard began faintly. "But my husband hasn't come, and your nephew said he'd talk to you and that maybe you'd change your mind—"

"He has." Miss Avrilla's own voice sounded as though it came from a long way off. "And I guess I have," she said.

The conclusion of this story will appear next week.

“WITH THIS RING . . .”

Continued from Page 25

wide gold band. But the trade predicts gold will lose its popularity again with a return to jewel-studded platinum numbers.

For the girl who wants to be different, the jewelers always have unique items on tap, such as the giddy style that says “I love U” in the engraved dots and dashes of the Morse code. More serious-minded is the rosary ring, the ten beads winding around the circlet in raised fashion, ending in a tiny cross. Some bear engraved figures of a bride and bridegroom in full wedding regalia, or overlapping hearts pierced by an arrow. Others have inscriptions like “Yours Forever” engraved on the outside instead of on the ring's inner surface. If a bride has a yen for something extra special, the ring makers will whip it up. For example, one wedding band was made of tiny bells because bells were ringing when the young man popped the question. For the girl who gets the twitches from the feel of a conventional ring, a manufacturer can and has produced a ring as flexible as a two-way stretch. It was held together by tiny platinum wires.

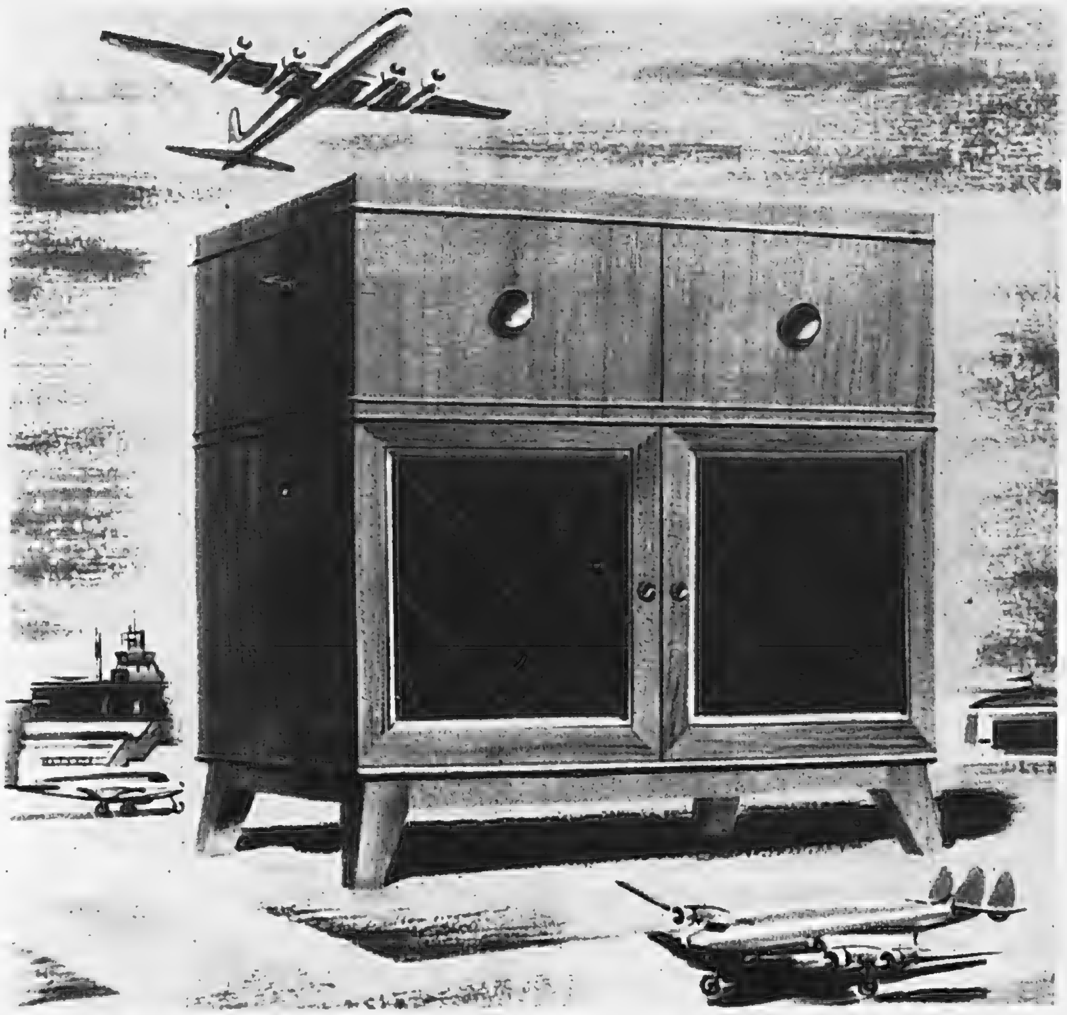
As for “solid gold” wedding bands, if you managed to buy one you'd literally find you had a dud on your hand, for pure gold won't hold its shape. The Federal Trade Commission is pretty particular about it, too, and bars the use of the term “solid gold” from the copy of overly enthusiastic ad writers. Alloys are added to the gold used in wedding rings to give it desired hardness.

A gold wedding ring starts as part of a 24-carat ingot. The ingot is rolled into fine strips and then dumped into a crucible with alloys. For a 14-carat yellow gold—the ideal carat content—583.3 per cent fine gold, with the balance silver and copper, is used. Nickel is heavily used for white gold and copper for pink gold. For platinum 10 per cent iridium platinum is used, with the balance pure platinum.

Stamping machines punch out the ring forms after the metal has been checked to make sure it has the right content. Other processes spin the metal to finger sizes. The average size is six.

Another important step in manufacturing that little symbol of your marital status is stamping on the carat mark. And if any maker gets careless with his carat stamps, the Jewelers Vigilance Committee and the U. S. Bureau of Standards will pounce on him. While the WPB ban on gold for rings was on, the legitimate manufacturers had competition from the black market. Many a wedding band turned up with a 14-carat marking when it was only 10-carat gold. Another black-market trick was to turn out a circlet of nickel that had been gold plated.

The final step in making a wed-



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Since 1930 Lear has been building aircraft radios — radios that pilots have depended on to guide their precious planes and passengers safely.

It takes extra skill and extra care to build radios like these. And building constantly toward perfection has become a habit with Lear.

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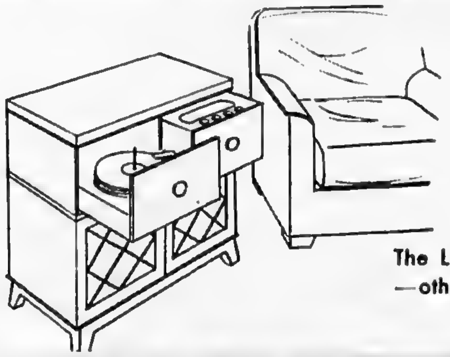

The Lear compact console $171.49
—other models from about $500 to $24.15
Prices slightly higher west of the Rockies

LEAR *The Name Men Fly By*

ding ring is the "embroidering." If it's mass production, the rings are engraved by machine. Intricate art carving is done by hand. The routine is more complex if a ring is to be set with diamonds. The stone itself must go through a series of delicate operations before it reaches the workbench for its union with the ring.

With diamonds, quality means more than size, and the average purchaser is often at a loss in making a wise selection. One firm, the A. H. Pond Co., Inc., makers of keepsake rings, introduced a unique policy. The purchaser gets a certificate of permanent registration and guaranty which tells him that the ring is as represented under the standards of the Federal Trade Commission. In addition, the number of the ring and the name and address of its owner are permanently registered with the company.

A manufacturing side light in ring making adds up to a yearly $25,000 bonanza in gold for J. R. Wood and Sons. During the making of wedding rings, gold dust kicked up along the line sifts into clothing, sticks to shoes and hands, and seemingly vanishes into the air. And it would be gone for good but for the methods used to recover it. Soft floor coverings, for example, hold the gold dust that sifts down from workbenches. Floor sweepings also are burned and refined and the workmen wash their hands in special basins that are painstakingly drained. Walls are vacuumed and the workers' smocks are company laundered.

INSCRIBING some sentiment on the inside of the wedding band goes back about as far as rings themselves. A fifteenth-century French inscription soberly advised, "Let man not separate what God hath joined together." A four-times married Englishwoman once wore a ring that bore this inscription: "If I survive, I will have five." Modern inscriptions indicate varying degrees of confidence in the permanence of wedded bliss. "Till the End of Time" and "Yours Till Eternity" represent the optimists. A certain skepticism figures in these two: "I'll see you in Reno" and "Wanna Bet?"

Wedding bands weren't always worn on the third finger, or even on the left hand. The index and middle fingers, the thumb, and even the little finger all had their day. Today's custom of third finger, left hand, stems from a romantic Greek fallacy that the vein from this particular finger had an exclusive pipe line to the heart. Actually veins from all the fingers reach the heart.

Wedding rings have undergone considerable revision through the years, but as long as people continue to get married, they'll continue to seal the ceremony with a ring. In fact, it would seem that any young man wishing to tie up with a flourishing business just couldn't miss if he decided on a wedding-ring outfit.

THE END

Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

LIFE GOES ON: I don't believe most people prepare themselves for a happy old age. But I saw one couple, the host and hostess at a recent cocktail party, and it's my guess they're set for fun the rest of their lives, health permitting. They were giving the party to announce the engagement of their daughter. Two older sons were already married and have families of their own. The daughter was the last chick. All too often the departure of children leaves parents forlorn and lonely and full of self-pity. But this unusual mother and father will be too busy to feel sorry for themselves. They both have consuming hobbies, and hobbies are not like children—they can't marry and move away. Our host's hobby is gardening and he works at it with the passion of a gifted painter at his easel. No mother could tend a child more devotedly than he tends his lilacs, dogwood, rhododendrons, azaleas, roses, and fig trees, not to mention assorted vegetables. He practically massages them into lush fruition, and croons over them as he shows selected guests his particular pets. His other passion is fine food, and it is his good fortune to have a wife who is a gourmet in her own right. Planning delicious meals is a hobby with her, which occupies too much of her time to leave any for moping when daughter leaves. As for food shortages cramping her style, they just don't. On the contrary, they are a challenge to her genius and her ingenuity.

ANXIOUS PARENTS: Several months ago the birth of a new magazine was announced on this page. Its name, TWO TO SIX—The Magazine for Parents of Young Children, caught the eye and interest of countless Liberty readers who have since written for information as to where it may be obtained. As letters are still coming, and my typewriter ribbon is worn out with answering, here's the low-down. It has just become a monthly, instead of a bimonthly publication, and it is published by Two to Six, Inc., 420 Madison Avenue, New York City 17. The May issue includes such provocative titles as: Dad's Day Off; My Husband Didn't Wear a Uniform; Do You Wish He Had More Pep? Are You Making Your Child a Snob? and How to Help the Elder to Accept the New Arrival.

HIGH PRICE OF BREAD: Dr. Helen Harris, chairman of the Bronx Consumer Co-ordinating Council, has protested to Economic Stabilizer Chester Bowles and to Price Administrator Paul A. Porter that housewives are not against smaller loaves to save wheat for the starving, but that they feel cheated paying higher prices for smaller loaves and rolls. Me too!

ATTENTION, OPA

A higher price for a smaller roll
Offends a thrifty housewife's soul!

GILDING THE LILLY: Lilly Daché and Sally Victor have designed a joint flock of toothsome wedding hats to team up with incandescent diamond jewelry by Arpels and Van Cleef. The sparkling collection was shown to the press at a cocktail party enlivened by a Punch and Judy show during which Judy gave her mate appropriate whacks about the ears for failing to deck *her* ears and head with suitable jewelry and millinery. It was pointed out that brides are wearing platinum and diamonds and fancy dress again, now that they are no longer war brides. White or champagne-colored satin, felt, feathers, and horsehair were involved in the bridal hats, all of which were frosted in one niche or another with fabulous diamond clips or pins. Sally Victor's specialty was the headdress comprised of a small white feathery tidbit and a tulle wedding veil. With the veil removed, the hat could be worn for all sorts of parties during and after the honeymoon. Many of the Daché hats were perched far back on the head, leaving room for a diamond ornament to flash in milady's hair or at the edge of the hat.

TOLEDO LICKS THE STRIKE PROBLEM

Continued from Page 19

sions industrialists chatted with the union leaders they had fought with in many disputes. The members had undergone a process of "learning" each other, of shedding misconceptions common on both sides.

There also was a banquet in honor of Cheyfitz one night, when it was learned he was leaving Toledo to work with Eric Johnston. The banquet was sponsored not only by the unions but by the very industries he had fought for ten years.

"If, ten years ago," the master of ceremonies marveled, "anyone had wanted to bet that industry would be giving Eddie Cheyfitz or any other labor leader a dinner tonight, he could have named his odds and still failed to find a taker."

This was the same union leader who had been accused before the Dies Committee in 1941 of being a Communist and one of the Reds who "want to have the government take over the plants."

But it was not all sweetness and light. Early in its existence the committee itself ran into personnel troubles. One top official of a big company accepted appointment to the committee but failed to attend. He sent word that he was too busy and would send an alternate. That aroused Gosser of the C.I.O.

"We're all busy," he said. "We agreed that the men who make the decisions for industry and labor are the only men who can achieve something here. We want no alternates. We want the boss." The committee promptly voted that failure to attend three meetings constituted automatic resignation.

The talks could not have gone on at a worse period. During the meetings the whole postwar collapse of labor peace took place. The steel and G.M. strikes broke; G.E. went out. Even Biggers' plant was shut down by a strike in the flat-glass industry. The Willys-Overland seethed with conflict over "super-seniority." Still the eighteen men talked.

THE principles of the Toledo charter were not clutched out of the thin air of theory. Every man around the committee table remembers, for example, the bloody Electric Auto-Lite strike of 1934. And now the members of the committee watched Royce G. Martin, present head of Auto-Lite, discuss with Gosser some of the issues of the charter. There had been a change since 1934.

Perhaps a contributing factor in that change was the brief existence of the Toledo Industrial Peace Board following the turbulent Auto-Lite strike. It functioned only as a mediation agency for four years and withered away when Washington began to engage in conciliation activities to a greater extent. But in spite

CAN A YOUNG WIFE AVOID
this pitfall in marriage?

Ignorance of these *Intimate Physical Facts*
has wrecked many an otherwise happy marriage!

Is *your own* case similar to this? Your marriage started out just sparkling with romance, love and happiness. Then slowly it dawns on you that your marriage is lacking something. Your husband grows more indifferent—less attentive in those little things so dear to a woman's heart.

Too many married women still do not realize how important douching often is to intimate feminine cleanliness, charm, health and *marriage happiness*—how important douching is to combat one of woman's most serious deodorant problems. And what's *more* important—they do not know about this newer, scientific method of douching with—ZONITE.

No Other Type Liquid Antiseptic-Germicide Tested Is SO POWERFUL Yet SO HARMLESS

Thanks to a world-famous Surgeon and a renowned Chemist who have given the world the remarkable ZONITE principle—wise women no longer use old-fashioned, ineffective or dangerous products. The ZONITE principle developed by these two great men of Science was truly a miracle—the first antiseptic-germicide in the world that was *powerful enough* yet positively *non-poisonous, non-irritating, non-burning.*

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ZONITE actually destroys and removes odor-causing waste substances. Helps guard against infection. It's so *powerfully effective* no germs of any kind tested have ever been found that ZONITE will not kill on contact. You know it's not always possible to contact all the germs in the tract. BUT YOU CAN BE SURE ZONITE *immediately* kills every *reachable* germ and keeps them from multiplying.

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of its limited scope, the Toledo Industral Peace Board settled 118 major and minor disputes.

However, even more stimulating than these memories were the disputes that thrust themselves upon the labor-management committee even before it had formulated its objectives. At the fifth meeting Lippmann broke into the discussion:

"Joe Tillman [of the Unitcast Corporation and a member of the committee] and I are each shut down because of strikes. It would seem that some help from this committee might be in order. We all might learn something."

Although one of the unions involved was beyond the authority of the Automobile Workers, Gosser volunteered to look into it. He found a seniority dispute in the Unitcast plant. "This is a job for your grievance committee," he told the union officers. "Get production going and your grievance committee meeting with management. I'll help you fight the grievance."

The plant was in operation two days later and Gosser helped to mediate the grievance, which was settled satisfactorily.

THE Textileather Company strike was more complicated. It involved the Textile Workers Union (C.I.O.) and was jurisdictional in nature. The management had sent in some A.F.L. construction men to make structural changes which would allow plant expansion. The C.I.O. men objected and had been out two weeks.

Gosser told the T.W.U. leaders that they must either define the area of the conflict and call a strike vote or else go back to work and mediate. He had no authority beyond his persuasive tongue and keen logic. Three days later the factory was in operation because, through Gosser's mediation, the management showed the union where more C.I.O. jobs would result from the expansion.

The committee followed these two disputes closely and they learned a great deal. They concluded that a large number of work stoppages, wildcat strikes, lockouts, or slowdowns were the results of minor issues, clashes of personalities, incomplete understanding on both sides, or even plain cussedness.

Then the committee was given a demonstration of the effectiveness of joint action by labor and industry. V-J Day came as suddenly to Ohio as elsewhere and men were being laid off. The state's unemployment compensation amendment, which liberalized payments, was passed on July 11, effective October 12.

"Will the industry representative join with us," Gosser asked, "in urging the Governor of Ohio to call a special session of the Legislature in order to declare the amendment an emergency measure so that it may be effective at once?"

The industry members were quick to co-operate. And on September 5 a measure was enacted making the liberalized payments effective at once and, in addition, making them retroactive to V-J Day.

"Mother, we don't have to pay Professor Tosca a dollar a lesson. I fired him!"
LIBERTY

This demonstration of co-operative action toward the same objective led the committee members into the toughest nut they had to crack. DiSalle appointed Judge Frank L. Kloeb of the Federal District Court to assist him in the warehouse strike that was threatening the city's food supply. The problem was brought to the committee by two other members, Franz Berlacher, president of the Toledo A.F.L. Teamsters Council, and Lawrence F. Steinberg, state director of the United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees Union (C.I.O.).

Judge Kloeb and DiSalle quickly got the warehouse operators and *both* Steinberg and Berlacher together. Six of the warehouses settled at that meeting for raises of thirteen cents an hour, while the seventh warehouse accepted the same increase on November 14.

THUS the charter of industrial harmony was being pounded into shape on the economic battlefield. It was accepted and made part of Toledo's city ordinances on February 13, 1946. It was to be expected that it should contain statements of mutual responsibility of both labor and industry and set up the machinery of mediation. But it goes much further than these basic concepts which have been evolved through the years.

The Toledo charter emphasizes a theory of "preventive arbitration" by which the committee can enter any dispute, whether requested or not. It can act even on reports of an impending dispute that might affect production. The sixth principle of the charter advances still further the preventive aspects of industrial relations. It names, as a fundamental activity of the committee, the establishment of "an educational program to promote better mutual understanding between workers, stewards, union officials, supervisors, foremen and managers."

This idea is not new. It was proposed some time ago by Major Charles Estes of the U. S. Conciliation Service. But, its incorporation into a city ordinance is the first time the need for education of both management and labor has received official recognition.

In another part of the charter the committee took a long step forward. This is an agreement on an economic principle that has been voiced by both labor and industrial leaders throughout the country.

"Management and labor agree that improvements in productive efficiency and technological advances result in lower costs and selling prices and wider markets for the products of industry, thereby making possible higher wages and a rising standard of living and increasing employment."

This expression of the economy of plenty was born in the midst of one of the committee's frequent crises, when industry members accused labor of premeditated slowdowns. It was a knockdown fight in prospect when Martin analyzed slowdowns.

"There are two reasons for slowdowns," he said. "One, they are afraid that if they produce beyond certain limits the price on the job will be cut. That is their fear. My contention is that ninety-five per cent of the people in my shop are absolutely honest. They don't want to stop production; they want to see if there is any way to get another dime—any way to do this. The other five per cent you cannot help."

ALL the members realized that this was true of management—any way to get another dime—except the percentage that tried to get that extra dime through unfair exploitation of labor or unethical competitive practices. This was more realism and Gosser recognized it.

"I believe Mr. Martin's statement is true," he said. "Ninety per cent of them do not know why they slow down. Absenteeism also is a factor in lowering production, and you gentlemen know that we have taken steps against it, even to the point of discipline in some cases."

With such candid talk, it was easy for the committee to adopt its "productivity" principle in the charter.

Today the Labor - Management Citizens Committee is a permanent part of the city's government, with a purpose, expressed in the preamble, "To jointly seek successful patterns of democratic economic living and to achieve self-government in industry, and to provide a means of minimizing and reducing the possibility of loss of production and wages. . . ."

And Toledo finds that talking it over pays off—in profits and wages—which are both based on production.

THE END

THE SEA IS A FUNNY PLACE, MISTER

Continued from Page 29

"I wouldn't know." Mattsen's voice was mild. "But the sea is a damn funny sort of thing, mister."

He walked on a few steps before he spoke again. "You want to grab any kind of break you can get in this business, because you're up against plenty. Though I'm not superstitious I know that."

Walt followed the mate up the gangway to the silent ship in a mess of confusion and disillusion. The sea should be a dignified and rational profession. This chatter about luck jarred on him.

Duke Slater, the third mate, as young a man as Walt but a lot more knowing, greeted them curtly. Walt climbed the ladder to the lower bridge and stood at the rail looking out over the dark tracks with the high land of granite Cornwall rising beyond them. He was aware that Mr. Mattsen had knocked on the Old Man's door and gone in. Perhaps Captain Ezra Bartlett of Falmouth, Massachusetts, wouldn't share the mate's childish enthusiasm for Al Gurk.

Captain Bartlett followed Mattsen out onto the deck.

"If the old rat has lost his gear, there's an old bridge coat of mine in the closet he can cut down to a pea jacket," Captain Bartlett said. His voice was animated. "Let me know."

Morosely Walt Hartley retreated to the shelter deck and finally brought up alongside Duke Slater. Together they contemplated the black current talking to the ship as it rushed seaward through the sharp narrow cut in the high cliffs that made this place a port. A big tidal drop here. You had to watch your lines.

Walt sounded out Duke Slater, and then told him the story.

"A couple of superstitious old goats," said Duke succinctly. "Nice superiors for us! I wouldn't trust either of 'em to demonstrate rowboats on the fifth floor of Macy's."

He tapped Walt on the chest. "Thousands of tons of modern steel ship in their charge and they act like a couple of kids trying to cure a wart by putting a spell on it. Why, if I—or you—had command, I'd run this freight box like it ought to be run—on a cold business basis.

"Take a tip from me," Duke dropped his voice. "I'm going to yes these two old hexers right to the lightship to get myself a good report. Then I'll try to grab off a harbor job with the line. That's where the money is."

"I wanted to go to sea," Walt said slowly.

Duke Slater knocked the dottle out of his pipe into the running tide.

"A subway motorman stands a more exciting watch," he said. "You

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romantic or something? Get wise! The sea's a shrinking dirty-water puddle these days."

You couldn't get around it. He was right.

AL GURK came aboard soon after sunrise. He was cold sober, shivering, and cheerful. By daylight his torn shirt, patched pants, and broken shoes looked to Walt Hartley like stuff a man would get to hide his nakedness when he traded his own shore clothes for cash.

Though Walt tried to be fair-minded, this gaunt knob-jointed derelict with bloodshot brown eyes and a chopped-off beard prematurely streaked with white looked like no great addition to the Sebring's crew.

But Walt was busy that morning; though the china clay hadn't come down from the hills, Mr. Mattsen had work for him. He got only a few brief glimpses of Gurk. One of these was of the new A.B. rummaging unobtrusively in the refuse that the steward had piled on the port side of the deck aft of the bridge house to throw overboard when the ship got out to sea.

Gurk had collected a couple of paper-covered novels, an old pair of shoes far better than his own, and a cracked phonograph record. He was holding precariously to his lips the broken pieces of a terra-cotta ocarina, or sweet potato, and producing a few dubious notes. He added it to his pile of salvage.

During the afternoon disgusted Duke Slater reported that the drunk was trading. The colored crew messman was stalking up and down the passageways with the Old Man's bridge coat buttoned tightly around his fat body. Already Al Gurk had a sweater, a pair of corduroy pants, a slicker, a pipe, and a tobacco pouch, and was knitting himself a muffler.

That evening Mr. Mattsen came clumping along the deck with a broad grin creasing his face. He jerked a thumb aft at the carpenter shop.

"Gurk's got two O.D.s in there making metal souvenirs of Crossroads, the Navy's atom-bomb experiment, with a blowtorch," he reported. "And he's giving music lessons. Once he gets a deck under him, he's O.K."

"Does that add up to making the Sebring a lucky ship, sir?" Walt asked stiffly.

Mattsen shrugged his massive shoulders.

"It keeps 'em busy instead of bellyaching. And we don't need any luck in port; we need china clay."

He started away and then turned around. "I didn't say anything about her being a lucky ship," he said. "I wouldn't know about that."

It wasn't until next day that they got the hatches on over their china clay and started down Fowey River with the hose sending streams of gray water overside. Everybody was cheerful; they were homeward bound and the sun was out. Al Gurk had prevailed on somebody to give him a haircut and his beard was trimmed off straight on the bottom.

Off the head they got a wave from the departing pilot and squared away down the Channel. As Walt left his station by the engine-room telegraph on the bridge, he took a look ahead. The sun was fading out well before time to set. The southwester that was hitting her in the teeth was no more than Force 5, a fresh breeze. It was the speed of the ship that made it seem like something—that, and the stiff tide beginning to run strongly into the wind.

When Walt came up on deck a little before eight, to stand his usual first-night watch, he found that the wind had eased off. The air was soft in the blackness ahead and he knew it was thickening up. A long swell ran under the ship.

The second mate gave him the course and the time of a bearing on the Wolf light.

"You want to watch out for the pilchard fleet out o' Mounts Bay, the Old Man says." His voice had the relaxing tension of a man going off watch. "They often hang out between Land's End and the Scilly Isles at this season."

He jerked a hand downward toward the captain's quarters. "The orders are call him the minute it thickens or anything else happens," he said and flipped the hand forward. "You'll be trying to locate the end of your own nose in the fog before you're through. Feel how mild it is?"

"I'd rather have a full gale than fog at the mouth of the Channel," Walt said, trying to make it sound salty. "There's too much traffic—"

"And not only traffic," the second broke in. "Loose mines."

He indicated the radio room.

"Sparks picked up a report about an Elson freighter hitting one somewhere around here. They're thicker than seaweed in the Gulf Stream. Well, have fun."

ALONE, Walt had a long look ahead. Maybe he could make out a net fisherman in time to do something about it. But drifting mines carried no running lights.

He went into the wheelhouse. The helmsman was on the course. He returned to the black bridge.

The Sebring, pitching rhythmically, was shoving steadily on into a blackness that was complete. There was no telling where sky ended and sea began. But the blackness still had depth to it. That meant there was visibility.

A man ought to feel mighty important in charge of a ship this size jamming through the night in the Channel. But he didn't feel that way. He felt like the small end of a nub. It was a big sea. Things could happen beyond his power or any man's power to control. He was alone in a world made up of a monstrous cloud-hooded sky with immensity beyond it and a black-surfaced impenetrable ocean.

Suddenly it seemed to him that the darkness had become peopled with ghosts, gray, formless ghosts that went drifting past in rapidly thickening numbers. He straightened.

"Start the fog whistle," said a voice. "Drop her to sixty revs."

So the Old Man hadn't even trusted him to know a fog when it came in. He'd been prowling around, waiting for it. Walt repeated the orders woodenly, hastened into the wheelhouse, switched on the automatic whistle control and got the junior third engineer on the phone.

"Down thirty-two to sixty," the youthful engineer below repeated briskly. "Fog, Walt? I ain't noticed a thing down here."

THE raucous voice of the whistle bawled a boisterous threat at the ghostly vapor. Walt listened. Sometimes when you opened up with the whistle you got an immediate answer from some guy who sounded no farther off than your own collarbone. But not this time.

It was a mighty quiet sea when the whistle cut off. Right at the Channel mouth and nothing else around. You might be the last ship on the Atlantic, the last ship afloat in a sunken world, for all you could tell.

Walt stood at the rail with his nose pointed ahead and watched to see what Captain Bartlett would do next. He had his nerve, the old walrus, running through this at twelve knots.

"On the other hand," he reminded himself, "it's Duke Slater's smart boys ashore in the front office that expect a ship to come in on schedule, bar nothing. The Old Man dropped her down fast enough when it thickened up."

He realized that Captain Bartlett really was staring ahead and no kidding about it. You couldn't see the forecastlehead now, yet he was straining to keep a lookout. Certainly he wasn't enjoying this, either. That was how you had to run ships in an airplane world.

Was it just a patch of fog or would they get three days of it?

After a short interval the Old Man went up on the bridge top. He stayed there about two minutes and then went down the ladder to the lower bridge. Up he popped again before the next blast of the whistle.

"Pull your lookout off the fo'c's'lehead, mister, and put him in the crow's-nest," he commanded.

Walt called his messenger. Maybe the fog was thicker close to the water, but a lookout up the foremast wouldn't be any great asset tonight. He caught a glimpse of the kid on lookout, Slim Russo, a cocky first-voyage O.D., coming off the head to climb the foremast.

"Well, the old wart's in there trying, anyhow," Walt admitted with reluctant justice. "I wonder if he's also rubbing the fur off a rabbit's foot inside his slicker pocket."

He snorted and went back to wasting his eyesight on the fluffy gray vapor through which they were sliding. You could feel the wetness of it on your face and in your lungs.

The mate loomed up alongside him. Mattsen said nothing; just stared ahead.

"What is this?" Walt asked himself irritably. "How many of these salty old so-and-sos does it take to stand my watch?"

He edged over toward Mattsen.

"Where's Al Gurk, sir?" he asked.

"Below," said the mate. "He's in the third's watch. Why?"

"If he's so blamed lucky, maybe we ought to have him forward, as a sort of figurehead, while we're driving through this stuff. A guy like that would fend off mines with his foot."

Mattsen was silent for a moment. Then he let go a short bark of laughter and moved away. Out in the wing of the bridge the Old Man was like a black statue.

"I'm getting jumpy," Walt muttered. "Otherwise I wouldn't be running off to him like that."

HE clamped his mouth shut and resumed that travesty of watchfulness. The watch crawled on. The wheelhouse clock knocked off two bells. He'd had one hour of this. One. He swore softly.

There came to his ears the faintest sort of addition to the unending rhythm of ship noises. He listened with savage concentration. It wouldn't do to drive ten thousand tons dead weight through the Mounts Bay fishing fleet. Neither would it do to report anything as dubious and probably as fanciful as that faint note to the Old Man. Imagination wasn't an asset in a watch officer; vision and hearing were what counted.

"No harm in listening," he decided, and tried to raise it again. He heard nothing. His eyes, dry and smarting from the strain, stared harder to reinforce his ears. Suddenly he made out again the bow of the ship, dark and powerful, driving into the gray of the mist. The fog was thinning a little.

He blinked hard to prepare his eyes for the grateful sight of the ship thrusting aside that film of unreality and sliding on into the honest blackness of night. But exasperatingly the fog hung on, thinning and thickening, always blunting the sharpest, most tense effort of eyesight to pierce it.

Abruptly he heard that intrusive note again, from dead ahead. By Peter, it was something! It must be something!

"Heard a horn, sir, ahead!" he yelped at the Old Man. He leaned far forward over the bridge rail, staring with all the concentrated power in his body at that blurred smoky sea just ahead of the bows.

A black smooth thing, enormous, rounded—like a low dark island rising from the sea.

"Left!" he shouted, jerking his head toward the wheelhouse door. "Left! Hard over! Hard!"

The Old Man's voice, a scant moment later, was reinforcing his own. A responsive cry from the helmsman—but the Sebring still plunged ahead, dead on toward that black mound in the sea. The Old Man beat him to the telegraph—and then he felt the slow, ponderous lunge of the ship toward the left.

"I have her, mister!" Bartlett snapped, head rigidly fixed. The Sebring's sharpening turn was slowly throwing her bow away from that huge thing ahead. That sent her stern swinging right into it. The Old Man waited an instant longer, gauging her speed, her distance, the loom of the monstrous thing. He spoke.

"Wheel midship—right! Right rudder! Hard over!"

You could feel the strain of the huge rudder set across the rushing water aft. The pressure of it was forcing the ship's stern to starboard, twisting her around that massive obstacle in a curve perilously close and yet clear.

Walt stared down and suddenly realized at what he was staring. It was the mighty bulk of a great ship, almost bottom up. He remembered then the second mate's chatter about the Elson freighter that had hit a mine somewhere around here. This was what was left of her—still afloat, and more dangerous than any mine.

That low water-weighted hull would have ripped the bottom out of the Sebring, gutted her like a finger shucking peas, sunk her in scant minutes.

From the foredeck of the Sebring came a sharp crack, loud in the sudden stillness.

"I thought we missed her clean!" Captain Bartlett muttered. "Get forward, mister, and see what that was!"

Walt jumped for the ladder and nearly fell on his way down. His knees were weak. They picked up strength as he hustled forward over the wet steel deck. Near the foremast he stopped.

Slim Russo, the kid lookout, was just scrambling down the foremast. At the foot, close to Walt's feet, he made out a blurred scatter of white pieces.

A big insulator fallen from aloft? He bent and picked up a couple of fragments. One of his fingertips slipped into a round hole. He realized suddenly that he was holding a bit of the terra-cotta ocarina, the sweet potato, that Al Gurk had salvaged from the steward's refuse pile.

His jaw dropped. That thing would emit a note like the one he had heard on the bridge, the sound that had made him strain his eyes so savagely ahead scant seconds before. Of course! The abandoned capsized hull of that freighter would

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Slim Russo spoke in a frightened, jerky mumble:

"I—d-dropped it outta the crow's-nest when we missed that thing. I didn't see no harm in tryin' to play it up there to keep me awake. Al Gurk traded it to me this afternoon for a sou'wester."

"Get aloft and stay there till you're relieved," Walt said sternly.

He walked back to the bridge. He was drenched with cold sweat.

Gunnar Mattsen was there beside the captain and both men were looking sharply forward through the thinning fog.

"Lookout dropped something, sir," Walt reported to the Old Man. "We cleared the derelict altogether."

"You've got a fine set of senses, mister," said Captain Bartlett. "Better than mine. I've never said that to a watch officer in all my time at sea. Was it the slap of the waves on that hull you made out?"

It seemed to Walt Hartley that he could almost hear the counseling voice of Duke Slater speaking to him: "Say yes, you lug! You'll get a good report—a shore job. You've got this racket licked for life."

Walt glanced ahead. The fog was really lifting now—drifting away like clouds of dispersing ghosts—but beyond it was the sea, black, mysterious, enigmatic. Vast and formidable, not to be underestimated.

"No, sir," he said to Captain Bartlett. "It was just chance, sir. The lookout was playing an ocarina. I heard a stray toot out of it and thought it was something ahead."

He glanced at silent Gunnar Mattsen and added slowly, "Al Gurk traded that thing to him this afternoon."

Ezra Bartlett rumbled unintelligibly in his throat before he spoke:

"Chance? At sea we call it luck."

He studied the clearing night. "I'm turning in. It's your watch, mister."

He walked off toward the radio room.

WALT'S ears were tingling. "It's your watch, mister!" The Old Man meant that. It was his watch—with no strings to it.

Mattsen's big fist pounded him in the ribs.

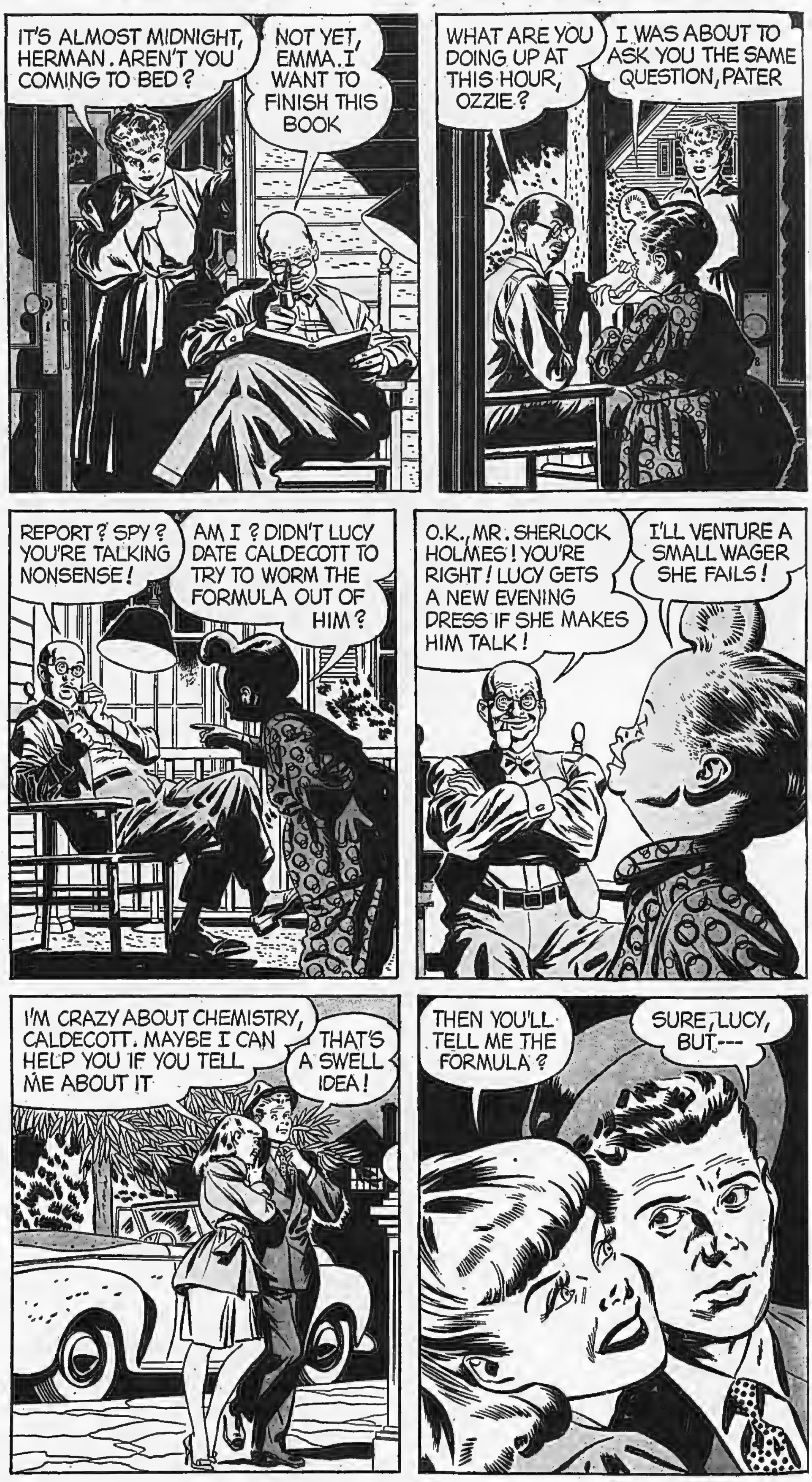
"It don't make much sense to me, either, Walt." His voice was puzzled, confiding. "But saying 'If you get it you get it' is too easy. You want to grab any kind of break you can in this business, because you're up against plenty."

He gestured overside. "The sea is bigger'n the front office. You can't tame it with a schedule. But don't get superstitious about it."

Walt nodded. "I won't," he said. He understood then that the superstition of these two old seamen was essentially a respect for the power and mystery of the sea. A man who had stood a tough watch could go along with them on that.

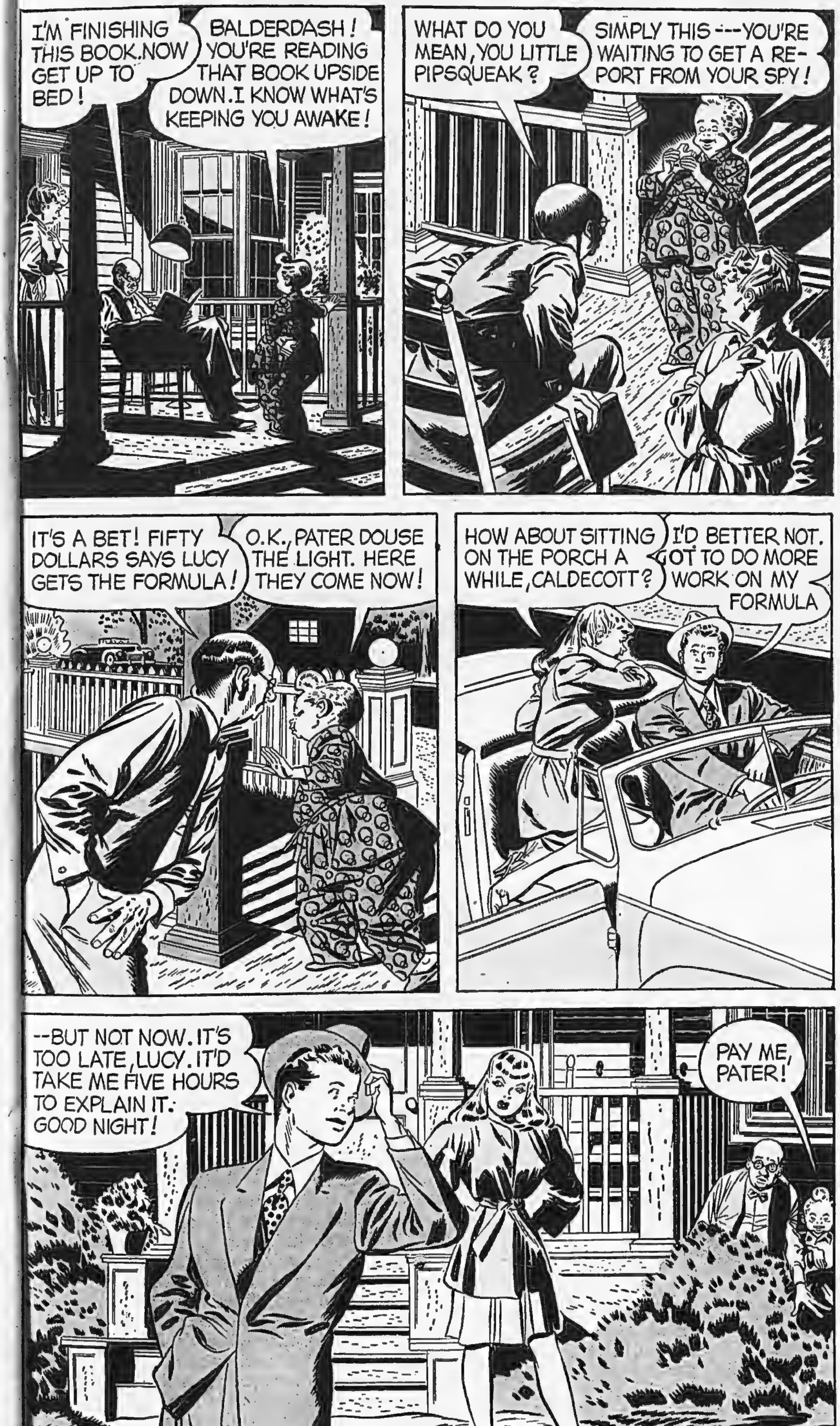
THE END

THE THROPP


IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT, HERMAN. AREN'T YOU COMING TO BED?
NOT YET, EMMA. I WANT TO FINISH THIS BOOK
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP AT THIS HOUR, OZZIE?
I WAS ABOUT TO ASK YOU THE SAME QUESTION, PATER
REPORT? SPY? YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE!
AM I? DIDN'T LUCY DATE CALDECOTT TO TRY TO WORM THE FORMULA OUT OF HIM?
O.K., MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES! YOU'RE RIGHT! LUCY GETS A NEW EVENING DRESS IF SHE MAKES HIM TALK!
I'LL VENTURE A SMALL WAGER SHE FAILS!
I'M CRAZY ABOUT CHEMISTRY, CALDECOTT. MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU IF YOU TELL ME ABOUT IT
THAT'S A SWELL IDEA!
THEN YOU'LL TELL ME THE FORMULA?
SURE, LUCY, BUT---

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**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WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU LITTLE PIPSQUEAK?
SIMPLY THIS---YOU'RE WAITING TO GET A REPORT FROM YOUR SPY!
IT'S A BET! FIFTY DOLLARS SAYS LUCY GETS THE FORMULA!
O.K., PATER DOUSE THE LIGHT. HERE THEY COME NOW!
HOW ABOUT SITTING ON THE PORCH A WHILE, CALDECOTT?
I'D BETTER NOT. GOT TO DO MORE WORK ON MY FORMULA
--BUT NOT NOW. IT'S TOO LATE, LUCY. IT'D TAKE ME FIVE HOURS TO EXPLAIN IT. GOOD NIGHT!
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Continued next week

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DESIGNING WIDOW

Continued from Page 31

No doubt he remembered Sharon, who started, Harris had said, by putting a washer in the connection of her garden hose. Or Franklin, who fixed her leaky taps. Or Bigelow, who nailed her mailbox on the post.

"Mrs. Calhoon," he said, "I sincerely wish I could help you. But I don't have any pinchy thing, and anyhow I make it a rule never to loan tools. It's the only way to be friends with your neighbors. And an automobile is Greek to me. If you press the starter, they go. That's all I know."

"Oh," the widow said, somewhat taken aback. Wilpert had made his pronouncement in a firm tone that hardly was friendly. "Well, thanks a million anyhow, Mr. Wilpert. I wonder what I'll do. Oh, dear. Well, thanks anyhow, Mr. Wilpert."

Wilpert planed his door down to the pencil line, took it in and hung it, and then sat down to read the paper. He felt pretty good. He'd settled her hash. But, still, it was sort of a shabby thing to do.

Next morning he was backing out of his garage to go to work when there was a scream from behind. He jammed on the brakes and the widow came around the car.

"Oh, my goodness, Mr. Wilpert, I thought you'd run over me. I came hurrying over when I saw you go out to your garage and I wonder if it would be asking too much? If I could just beg a ride to the railroad station, I'd appreciate it so much. There are no buses, and of course my car's broken and I have to be to work. Just to the railroad station. I wouldn't ask to ride clear to the city, even though I suppose I'll be late, and Mr. Andrews, my boss, he's so fussy about being on time?"

"Get in," Wilpert growled. He felt a little sheepish about last night. After all, a helpless woman. . . . Then he set his jaw. "Let me look at that car of yours. Might be simple. Some little thing."

It was. The ignition wire had come out of the spark coil. He shoved it in, started her car, and walked off amid her profuse thanks.

TRAFFORD stopped by next day as Wilpert was setting a fence post. That's Ray Trafford; he's got the place on the corner of Alameda. He introduced himself and said, "Now, Rhigetti. Rhigetti gets along fine because he can't speak English—or can't to her. But Sharon, he fixed her hose."

"Look here, neighbor!" Wilpert flared. "If the rest of you are too damned mean to take half a minute to shove an ignition wire into a spark coil—well, I ain't!"

"No offense, Wilpert, no offense," Trafford said, backing away. "Just a little friendly advice is all."

"I don't need no advice. I can take care of myself!"

The neighbors felt pretty bad about it. That's how the others had been. Didn't realize. Wouldn't profit by advice.

"I'll give him six months," Harris said. "No more. Too bad."

Trafford said, "With that temper? Four months. Not a day more."

The widow drove past a bit later that same afternoon. She waved at Wilpert. He nodded stiffly and kept on making his fence. The widow swung into her driveway, and then screamed. Wilpert blinked. Her car went into the garage and straight through it, tearing out the back end, and then, luckily, stopped. Wilpert ran over. The widow was scared, a bit dazed, but unhurt. The car had a dented fender and a broken headlight; the garage had been flimsy.

"I pushed and nothing happened," she said.

WILPERT helped her out of the car, backed it around the garage and drove inside. "How long you been driving without brakes?"

"Brakes? My brakes have always been wonderful. Never a bit of trouble, until just now when I pushed and nothing happened. Do you suppose it's because of something you did to the car this morning?"

"Oh," said Wilpert. A slow and horrible thought must have been dawning. "No"—very firmly—"absolutely not. There is no connection between the ignition and the brakes. Nothing."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Wilpert. I didn't mean it that way. I don't know a thing about an automobile and I think it would be so easy to leave some screw loose or something, and now look what's happened. All on account of a silly little ignition wire. I think sometimes civilization has gone too far, don't you? It's too complicated."

Somewhat grimly, and a bit shaken but with new resolve, Wilpert towed her car to the garage in town. He wouldn't so much as bend over to look at her brakes. Then he drove the widow home, got a saw, hammer, and square and nailed the boards back onto the end of her garage. The garage had to order a headlight, and that meant that for a week Wilpert drove the widow to the city and back every day. The neighbors shook their heads sadly. Wilpert had seemed just the man for the Sharon place, too.

She got her car from the garage and for a couple of days he had the peace and quiet he yearned for. Then, as he was fixing supper the next evening, she knocked at the screen door and said, "Mr. Wilpert, I hate to bother you, but do you think how the garage was broken has anything to do with it?"

"Do with what?" he said. And then, catching himself, he declared firmly: "No, of course not. There's not the remotest connection at all. Not in the least."

"I'm glad of that, but it's funny, just the same. When I flip it, nothing happens."

Now, Wilpert was a handy man. He could do most anything from grafting a tree to installing a bathtub. This indefinite helplessness played on a man's impulse to display superiority. But he ruthlessly squelched the desire to ask what didn't happen when she flipped what. "I guess you'll just have to call an expert," he said.

"Oh, dear, it's too late now to get anybody out and it's quiz night."

"Quiz night?"

"Would you mind terribly, Mr. Wilpert, turning on your radio sort of loud for the quiz program from eight to eight thirty? I won't ask to come in. I'll just stand outside and listen."

Wilpert noticed that it was beginning to rain. He felt definitely like a heel. "I'll take a look," he said.

He went over and she showed him the light switch. "See? When I flip it, nothing happens."

He put a penny under a fuse and her lights went on. The widow thought he was marvelous, and invited him to stay and have a cup of coffee. Wilpert refused briefly. "Never touch the stuff."

"But I smell coffee every morning. The breeze is generally from that direction."

"Er—the kind without any what's-his-name in it. What's-his-name gives me nerves or something."

"That's the very kind I use, Mr. Wilpert. Isn't that lucky?"

He was in for it. Her percolator cord was frazzled and he fixed that for her while he was about it. While the coffee was being made he put a new washer in the leaky hot-water tap. And, sipping the coffee, he realized he was in for it. It all stemmed from poking that ignition wire into that spark coil. He knew now what Harris had meant about Sharon's mistake of putting a washer in her garden hose.

DURING the next month or so Wilpert had a harried look about the eyes. The same old look, the neighbors recognized sadly, as Sharon and the others. With a helpless woman there is no such thing as mechanical logic. To her, there was always some connection between what he'd done before and what needed doing later. As a barmaid's smile might cause a general to tarry and change the course of the world's history, as a single misstep in early youth can lead to a life of crime, so that ignition wire changed the destiny of Wilpert. Cause and effect. One thing led to another. Wilpert found himself rechanging the widow's doors, weather-stripping her warped windows, replacing her screens, rebuilding her fireplace, papering her walls, surfacing her driveway, edging her flower beds, fixing her fence, repairing her roof, painting her house, pruning her trees, spading her garden, laying her linoleum.

When she got the baby chicks he

knew he was licked. He had fixed up her chicken coop and put new wire on the run and hooked up the brooder. And then he spent an evening doing a little brooding of his own. Her place looked fine. And he hadn't had time even to finish fixing his own fence. One country place is all a man can handle in his spare time.

The next day he stayed home from work. He loaded up his homemade trailer and then he went out to the mailbox with a paintbrush and a hammer and a board. He painted out his name on the mailbox and tacked the board on the post. The board said, "For Sale."

Harris just happened to be coming by, and he stopped and said, "Well, sorry to see you go, neighbor. Nice little place. Could be a nice little place, if a handy man fixed it up."

"Just what I always wanted," Wilpert admitted bleakly.

"Too bad, Wilpert. Too bad. Got another place in mind?"

"Moving back to town. Taking a room. Called my old landlady and one's vacant. You know," Wilpert said softly, "I lived in a flat going on nine years and I never even knew the people on either side of me. Nobody to bother you. Well, good-by, Harris."

THAT evening Wilpert was sitting in his furnished room in town reading the newspaper. His shoes were off and he didn't have a worry in the world. No fence to fix, no garden to spade, no doors to hang, no nothing. No widow. And then there was a knock.

Wilpert started for the door. Then he stopped. "Who's there?"

"Oh, Mr. Wilpert," called the widow's voice, "I had such a terrible time finding you. You didn't tell anybody where you were going."

"That's right," he admitted.

"I had to find out through the real-estate man. The thing doesn't work and I'm terribly worried. When you push in the plug, nothing happens. And the baby chicks will smother. Do you think it's the way you hooked it up, Mr. Wilpert?"

Wilpert was shaken. He clenched his hands so hard his whole body trembled. And then with a sigh he opened the door. "Come in, Mrs. Calhoon. You mean the brooder?"

"It doesn't heat. And inasmuch as you hooked it up, I guess you're really the only person who'd know just what to do about it."

Wilpert drew in a great breath and slowly let it out. He said very calmly, "Have a chair, Mrs. Calhoon." And then he turned the key in the lock and put the key in his pocket.

The widow watched him with her innocent eyes round and wondering, "Mr. Wilpert, you act so strange. Do you feel well, Mr. Wilpert?"

"Mrs. Calhoon, there are two kinds of men in the world. There are those who are lucky, and there are those who get tangled up with women. I guess it's fate. And who am I, Mrs. Calhoon, to wrestle with my puny strength against fate? There's no future in it."

"Mr. Wilpert, I've never seen you this way."

"Mrs. Calhoon, you have been playing with fire."

"I don't understand, Mr. Wilpert. I think I'd better be going. Will you unlock the door, Mr. Wilpert?"

"Mrs. Calhoon, I want to ask you just one question. And I want a straight answer. Man and boy I've been tinkering with automobiles for many years. I have seen everything happen to a car that possibly could happen. But never have I seen an ignition wire fall out of a spark coil while a car was sitting in a garage. What happened to that wire, Mrs. Calhoon?"

The widow blushed, which made her look more like a child. "After all, Mr. Wilpert, I think neighbors in the country should get acquainted. And a woman certainly can't be forward."

"No, indeed, Mrs. Calhoon."

"And there are so many things around a country place where a woman needs just a little help."

"You're telling me, Mrs. Calhoon. You're telling me. But what about poor Sharon, and Ross, and Franklin, and the others? You chased them away."

"I don't think you're being very nice, Mr. Wilpert."

"You chased them away."

The widow tossed her head, "Well, what if I did? There wasn't a man of the lot who didn't expect something in return—well, you know what I mean—for doing me a little favor. You're the only gentleman who ever lived on the place."

"Is that brooder really haywire?"

"When you push in the plug nothing happens."

"That's not what I asked."

Pink flooded the widow's face again. "I believe I'd better be going, Mr. Wilpert," she said. And then, as he crossed to her with slow determination and a wolfish half-smile, she arose and said, "I—think I'd better be going!

"Mrs. Calhoon," said Wilpert, "even a gentleman can be pushed too far."

But as he closed in she didn't struggle. And a bit later she said, "But, Mr. Wilpert, you were the first man who lived there that I didn't want to be *too* much of a gentleman."

"And who am I," said Wilpert, "to fight against fate?"

THE neighbors felt it couldn't have turned out better. With the widow safely married off, Sharon bought his old place back and really fixed it up. Wilpert really made a smart move, they figured. Takes a lot of work on a country place. It would have been foolish to spend all the time he had getting the widow's place in shape, and then walk off and leave it.

THE END

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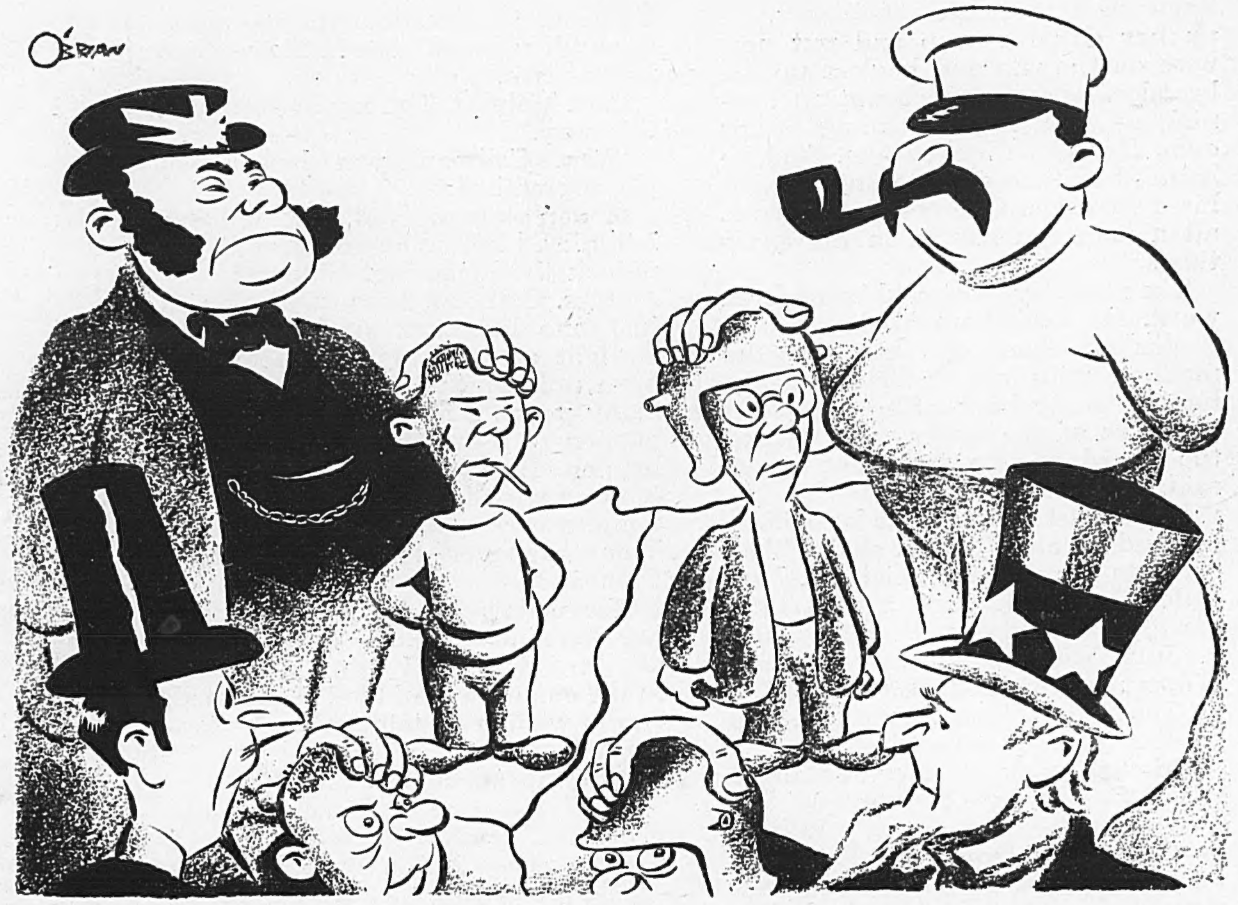

OCCUPATION ISN'T WORKING OUT

STATE DEPARTMENT officials are beginning to tumble to the fact that occupying armies in ex-enemy and "liberated" countries are having just the opposite effect from that originally intended. While the war was on, there was much talk about the necessity of winning not only the victory but the peace. Triple-ply thinkers, with an air of great wisdom, were fond of stating that we and our allies would have to occupy enemy countries for periods ranging all the way from ten to one hundred years. It was said that we would have to re-educate as well as disarm them in order to prevent a resurgence of militarism.

Militarism is resurging nevertheless throughout the world, and one of the chief reasons is the very presence of the occupying armies.

On this page in the November 10, 1945, issue we advocated that the Allies get their armed forces out of Germany and turn the administration of the country over to an agency of the United Nations. It was pointed out that the real danger was not of German rearmament, but that one or the other of the Allies would try to rebuild that country's armed strength in order to further its own policies. It was obvious even then that dividing Germany into zones would lead inevitably to the division of Europe itself into east and west blocs and bring the Allies into serious disagreement.

This is just what is happening today. The disarmament of Germany has stopped. Both in the east and the west a revival of strength is being encouraged and sponsored by the nations which, in theory at least, are still allies. This is the path the world's peace-loving nations followed to World War II. Even the casual student of history can see World War III looming on the horizon if present policies in Europe and Asia are continued.

The defeat of the Axis coalition was brought about by the joint efforts of nations which are supposed to abhor warfare. Having stricken the sword from the hands of the aggressors, they must not allow their mistrust of one another to lead them into the dangerous error of seeking to use their former enemies against their own allies.

The only sensible or safe way to administer defeated countries and turn their footsteps into peace-loving ways is through the United Nations and its agencies. Individual powers, each seeking its own advancement and betterment, cannot rule these territories without dangerous friction. The theory that it can be done in friendly and co-operative fashion by agreement among the governments concerned is unworkable and has already proved so to be.

Occupying armies should be withdrawn at the earliest moment and the administration of former enemy and "liberated" territory turned over to world authority. America's official views are tending in this direction, at least part way. Our allies, Britain, Russia, France, etc., must also be made to see that safety lies only in administration by an impartial agency.

Paul Hunter

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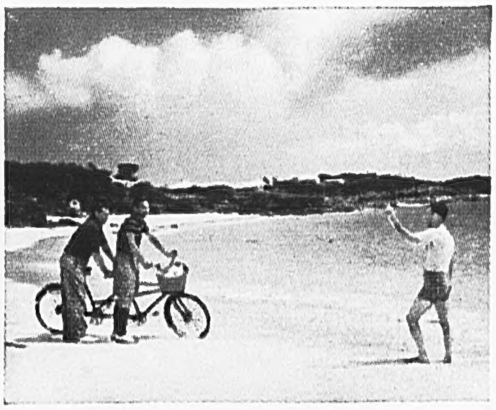

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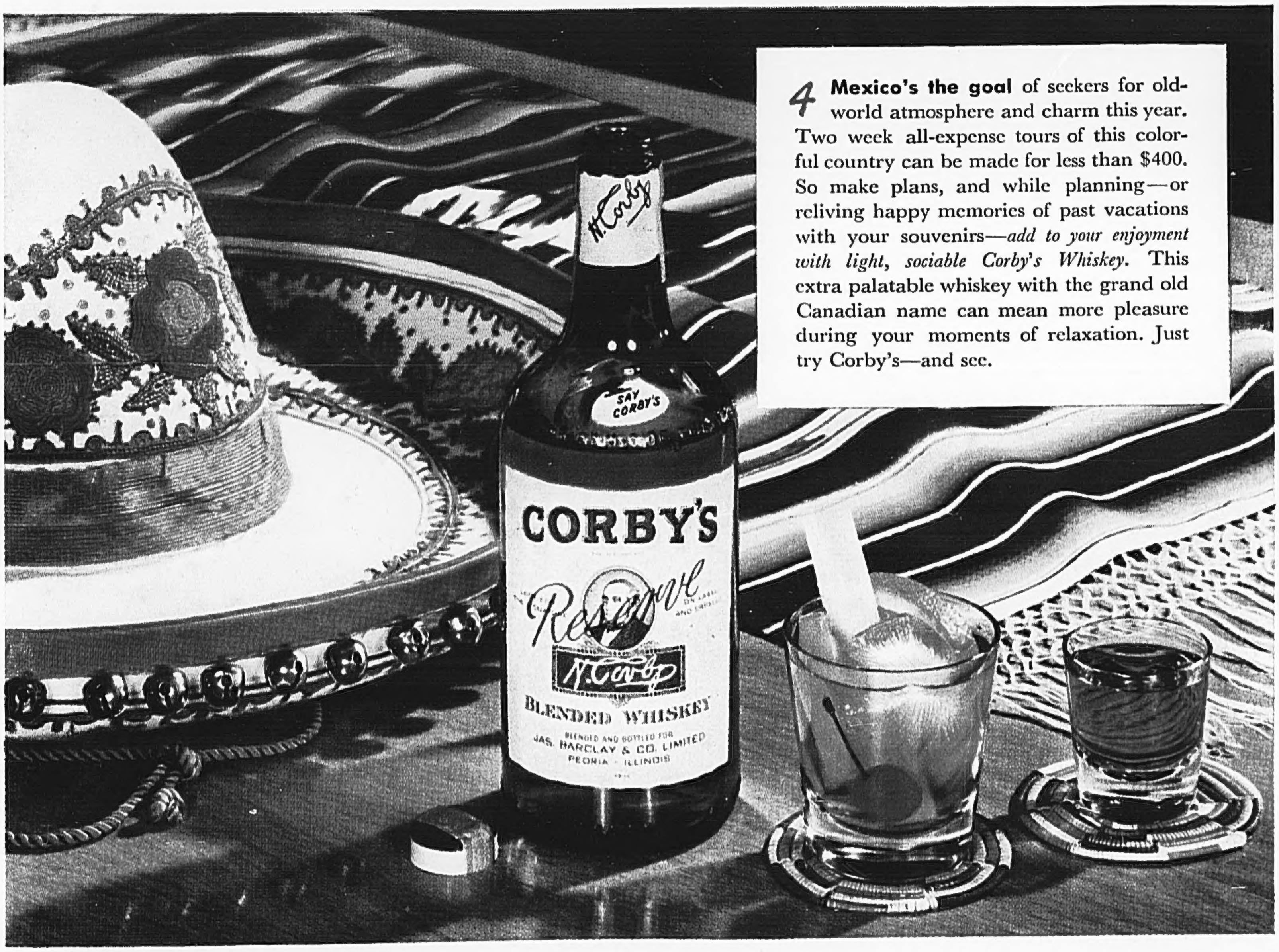

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A Grand Old Canadian Name

PRODUCED IN U.S.A. *under the direct supervision of our expert Canadian blender*
86 Proof—68.4% Grain Neutral Spirits—Jas. Barclay & Co., Limited, Peoria, Ill.

RESERVE
AT ITS PRE-WAR BEST
THREE FEATHERS
Blended Whiskey
RESERVE

For a perfect "serve"

A Julep made with *Three Feathers!* Yes, you serve an "ace" when it's made with this smoother, lighter, richer whiskey. *The finest-tasting Three Feathers in 63 years,* it adds new zest to *any* whiskey drink.

THREE FEATHERS
Reserve
First Among Fine Whiskies

Blended Whiskey 86 proof. 65% American grain neutral spirits. Three Feathers Distributors, Inc., New York